

THEMISTOCLES,

THE

Lover of his COUNTRY.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the *Theatre-Royal* in
LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS.

Themistocles autem quem virtus sua victorem, injuria patriæ Imperatorem Persarum fecerat; ut se ab eâ oppugnandâ abstinere, instituto Sacrificio exceptum paterâ, tauri sanguinem hausit, & ante ipsam aram, quasi quædam pietatis clara victima concidit. Quo quidem tam memorabili ejus excessu ne Græciæ altero Themistocle opus esset effectum est.

Val. Maximus, lib. 5. cap. 6. *De Pietate erga Patriam* —

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK LEWIS,

*Prince of Wales and Earl of
Chester, Electoral Prince of Brunswick
Lunenbourg, Duke of Cornwall and
Rothsay, Duke of Edinburgh, Mar-
quis of the Isle of Ely, Earl of Eltham,
Viscount of Launceston, Baron of
Snaudon and of Renfrew, Lord of
the Isles, and Steward of Scotland,
and Knight of the Most Noble Order
of the Garter.*

May it Please your Royal Highness,



HO' Your consenting
to this Address, be a
New Instance of that
condescending Good-
ness, and known Humanity,
A 2 which

DEDICATION.

which has made your late safe Arrival, one of the Blessings of His Majesty's Reign; yet it lessens the Presumption of the Author, when 'tis consider'd, that a Piece, writ with so honest a View, as the Love of our Country, and the Cause of Liberty, could be no where so properly address'd, as to the Son of that Excellent Prince, whose Sword and Councils have done more for them than all the Pens in *Europe*.

Be this little Piece, therefore, Sacred to all those growing Hopes, and noble Qualities, which these Nations behold with so much Transport in Your Highness, as the lovely Transcripts

DEDICATION.

Scripts of Your Royal Parents
Virtues !

May you ever tread in their
Steps, and, like them, make the
Peace, Unanimity, Honour and
Welfare of these Kingdoms,
and the Preservation, the eternal
Preservation of our civil and
religious Rights and Liberties,
Your perpetual Care ; and may
His Sacred Majesty, by his wise
and prudent Councils, so unite
all his unreasonably divided
Subjects, so calm the unnatural
Feuds and Clamours of ill-
designing Men, and so subdue
the Spirits of his Enemies, both
at Home and Abroad ; that after
a long, a long and happy Reign,
he may leave Your ROYAL

DEDICATION.

HIGHNESS a Legacy, nobler
than his Crown, the Hearts of
all his Subjects, and the Glory
and Prosperity of an united
People.

I am,

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient,

Most devoted,

Humble Servant.

bler
of
ory
ted



P R E F A C E.



THOUGH Prefaces are very
idle Things to Performances
of this kind, yet I find my self
under a Necessity of saying
something here, both that I may return my
Thanks to the Town for the favourable,
the very favourable Reception this Piece
has met with ; and also to give some short
Account, with all Sincerity and Candour,
as to the Occasion of its writing and pub-
lishing. Having always maintain'd (tho'
seldom with Success) that the Stage might,
under proper Regulations, be made sub-
servient to the propagating the noblest Sen-
timents, and the greatest Virtue among
our People ; and having, many Years

P R E F A C E.

since, observ'd something very great and exalted in the Character of Themistocles, and his Rival Aristides, I took a Resolution of bringing them together in the Manner I have done, meerly for my own Amusement in the Country, and to justify what I had so often asserted. It was finish'd in a much shorter Time than is proper to mention, and lay by me longer, and more entirely neglected and forgotten than is usual, I believe, in such Writings; till happening to shew it to a Friend, who thought better of it than it deserv'd, he tempted me to let it come out by the Offer of a noble Study of Books, out of the Profits of it, and to satisfy my Disinclination to appear in such an Affair, by transacting every Thing under his Cover. This was accordingly agreed to, and the Copy lodg'd with Mr. Rich, when the Death of my Friend, made it absolutely necessary for me, either to lose the Benefit of it intirely, or so far to appear in it, as not to let it be ruin'd by my own Neglect, or others Mismanagement, since there was no avoiding its coming into the World.

It

P R E F A C E.

It is not now publish'd with any vain Pretensions of setting up for a Poet, or to excel in a Way which so few are so happy to succeed in; or, when they do, are enough consider'd by the World to make others endeavour to imitate them. The Author has his Time and Thoughts engross'd with Matters infinitely more noble, as well as more delightful to him, than to indulge any Imaginations of that kind; yet, if so mean a Thing can be in the smallest Manner useful (for meer Entertainment is a poor Affair) to engage the Attention of Persons of distinguish'd Parts and Knowledge, as well as Fortune and Power, so far, as by their Means to influence others. (that have meaner Views in Acting, and lower Ways of Thinking) to entertain higher Notions of what they owe to themselves and Characters, to their Countrymen and Fellow-Citizens, and the sacred, the important Trusts many of them are invested with in their different Situations: If it can in the least occasion in them, a greater Scorn of a little transitory Riches, Power and Grandeur, and more elevated Thoughts of their Duty to our Excellent Sovereign (than whom

It

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whom I believe, a better Man, or a nobler Prince, never fill'd the Throne) and the Offices they are to discharge, in his and their Country's Service, either with Honour or Infamy, I shall think my little Pains, my poor Attempt this Way, abundantly rewarded.

But such Hopes are too vain to be indulg'd, and too ridiculous to be confess'd to have been the View of so trivial a Performance; and so leaving such Thoughts to those, who are better able to introduce them into the World, and make them as Fashionable as they are Reasonable; I shall rather chuse to take Notice (of what is, indeed, fitter for this Place) that tho' there are some little Deviations in this Piece from the antient Historians; such as Aristides bringing over, and dying with Themistocles, Xerxes's Passion for, and Marriage with Nesiptolema, and Artemisia's Affection to Xerxes; yet, as some Historians assure us, Aristides died in that Country about the publick Affairs, near that Time, and that Xerxes actually shew'd a tender Care of Nesiptolema, and made her a Priestess of the Sun, and that Artemisia's
constant

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constant Attendance on Xerxes's Wars and Person, makes the Passion here given her, no ways improbable, I hope the Liberties I have taken, are at least pardonable, if not approveable.

It was especially so desirable a Circumstance to bring Aristides, that amiable and exalted Character into View, and so proper an Expedient, by the Force of his Reason, Eloquence and uncorrupted Integrity, to blow up the Sparks of his Love to Athens, which ever lay glowing and smothering in the noble Breast of my Hero; that I hope the Criticks will forgive so obvious an Error, which I willingly fell into, and above all, since I freely acknowledge they may find several greater Ones, which deserve less Quarter.

Yet, with all its Faults, I did not think this Piece deserv'd so severe Treatment, as to be peremptorily refused, after the most earnest and early Sollicitations, at the Old House for two Winters together; which, however, I have the less Reason to complain of, since Mr. Rich's great Civility, and the agreeable Action of most of his Company, have prevailed on
all

P R E F A C E.

all the unprejudiced Part of the Town, to have every Day a better Opinion of this Piece, and their Performance of it, than other. But I owe it to every Gentleman that is more capable of entertaining the Town (and who, possibly, if more encourag'd, might even do their Country Honour) this way, to take Notice, that if Mr. Dryden, Mr. Otway, or Mr. Southern (whose first Plays were so vastly short of their following ones) had been so severely discouraged by the Managers of the Theatre, as Gentlemen are now, our Country had possibly wanted those great Ornaments of the Stage for ever.

*But I will not enlarge on so disagreeable a Subject, as it deserves, and shall turn to a more pleasing one, which, the mentioning the last of those Gentlemen, puts me in mind of; which is, that I think myself obliged to declare, whatever tolerable Reputation this Piece has got, is not a little owing to the warm Declarations, and hearty Zeal, which Mr. Southern (my old Acquaintance, and worthy Friend) was pleased to recommend it with, where-ever he came. Be this there-
for*

P R E F A C E.

fore paid as an honest Debt (and the last I shall ever owe him of this kind) due in Gratitude to his Affection and Friendship, who never forgot the smallest Obligation he received, or remembered the greatest he conferr'd on others.



P R O-

PROLOGUE.

IN these dull Days, this singing, fiddling Age,
When the scorn'd Muses, weeping, quit the Stage,
To Sounds, with Sense unburthen'd, veil their Lays,
While sweet unmeaning Songsters gain the Bays:
How vain is his Attempt, who hopes his Pen,
Can raise in us, our Fathers Souls again,
To think like Britons, and be pleas'd like Men?

Yet, this to Night, a Virgin Muse designs,
Who brings her Treasures from the Grecian Mines,
Our Isle to visit, Athens' Son revives,
To form our Manners, and adorn our Lives;
Till now unsung, Themistocles appears,
Great in the Praises of Two thousand Tears;
And brings a Crowd of the illustrious Dead,
In hopes that Britons in his Steps may tread!
In hopes your Country's Love each Breast may fill,
And Patriots act like Grecian Heroes still!

Oh blush for ever, if such Hopes are vain!
Blame your own Hearts, and not our Author's Strain;
With honest Views, his artless Scenes he draws,
And calls for Virtue, — and disdains Applause.
He aims not at a Poet's glorious Name,
'Tis Britain's Bliss he seeks, and Britain's Fame!
To make your Hearts burn for your Country's Good,
And scorn for that, your Wealth, your Ease, your Blood!
To hold e'en Life, a Trifle light as Air,
When weigh'd with conscious Honour, Truth, and Her!

Thus, brave Themistocles perform'd his Part!
Thus high his Views! thus generous his Heart!
Warm'd with such Thoughts, your once-fam'd Fathers
liv'd,

And their lost Liberties and Laws retriev'd.
From hence, this Isle, admiring Nations view,
The Seat of Freedom, and of Empire too.
Oh then be just unto Yourselves! Exert
That publick Zeal, which swells the Patriot's Heart:

Taught

P R O L O G U E.

*Taught by these Scenes, espouse your Country's Cause,
Renounce your Factions, and revere your Laws!
Let Grecian Virtue fire each Briton's Mind,
And shine the publick Patrons of Mankind!
Act not from servile Views of Power, or Place;
Preferr'd, be Just, or Loyal in Disgrace.
Sell not your Country, brib'd by foreign Gold,
Freedom and Honour never should be sold!
Scorn! Scorn, the narrow-minded Thirst of Gain,
And shew, that you deserve Great GEORGE should Reign!*



These Lines to be added on the KING's coming
to the House.

*Survey his beauteous Life, and thence assume
Virtue to rival ancient Greece and Rome;
Why should we copy them, when Britain's Throne,
Shews us such great Examples of our own?
There sits that Prince, whose Sword, our Country's Cause
Abroad hath fought, at Home defends our Laws;
Who, warm for Europe's Freedom stak'd his Blood,
And Spain and Gaul's dread Tyranny withstood;
When in the dreadful Fields of Mons, for Thee,
He scorn'd e'en Death, thrice beauteous Liberty!
Learn then from Him whose Virtues grace his Throne,
You are not born to serve Yourselves alone,
And for Britannia's Interest scorn your own.*



Dramatis



THEMISTOCLES,

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Lover of his COUNTRY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Xerxes's Camp in Magnesia in Asia.

Enter ARTABAN and MARDONIUS.

Artaban.



OW the World bends before him?—

Persia's Sons

Have lost the free-born Souls that
warm'd their Fathers,

And bow their Heads, the Vassals of
Themistocles.

Now by yon rising Sun (whose Beams no more
Auspicious smile on *Persia*) tho' I view
From hence the banded Force of all our Provinces,
These armed Millions, that, like some vast Swarm

B

Chear'd

Chear'd by his Beams, unhiv'd have left their Home
 To seek new Seats of Empire, tho' I hold
 My Country's Glory dear as Life, I loath
 The Power, the Conquests which this *Greek* has
 gain'd her!

Mar. How vain's Success, when Vict'ry only serves
 To aggrandize this Fugitive! — In vain
 Our populous *East* here pours forth her Strength,
 And sends her thronging Nations to the War
 T' avenge on *Greece* our Royal *Xerxes*' Wrongs,
 And wrestle with her for the World's wide Empire;
 If we, self-conquer'd, still must wear, my *Artaban*,
 This Exile's Chains, and call a *Greek* our General.

Art. Curst be his hated Nation, Name and Lineage,
 And doubly curst those ill-starr'd Days, *Mardonius*,
 When first this out-cast Wanderer came to *Persia*,
 And suppliant mov'd our easy Monarch's Pity!
 With all the soft Delusions of the Tongue:
 He own'd his Banishment, avouch'd his Innocence,
 And call'd on *Xerxes* and his Gods to save
 An homeless, hopeless, friendless Foe from Ruin,
 Ev'n I was mov'd, my yielding Soul was caught,
 And Grief prevailing o'er our antient Enmity,
 Melted my Heart to mourn his injur'd Virtue.
 Fool that I was — detested be my Tongue,
 I spoke for him, and wish'd I could have lov'd him.
 And now, — Oh perish most abhorr'd Remembrance —
 Why wilt thou rack my Soul? [sentments;

Mar. Nay give it vent, and rouse thy just Re-
 This Exile in return, this banish'd Fugitive,
 Mounts o'er our Heads, usurps our Place as Generals,
 Prescribes the Fate of *Asia* with his Breath,
 And dictates Law to us, nay more, to *Xerxes*,
 Who like a Cypher seems to stand beside him,
 Barely to give his Figure Place and Value.
 Gods! where's this Worth in him to raise him thus?

Art. None! none, by *Mithra*! Oh the hourly
 Thought

Preys on my Life.—— Had he superior Merit,
Pleas'd I'd resign my Post,—but name his Services.—
'Tis true,—he's just return'd from conqu'ring *Egypt*,
Where *Aristides*, his old Foe, was vanquish'd,
And half the boasted Force of *Greece* o'erthrown,
But with whose Swords? whose Blood? was't not
with ours?

Who with our Cavalry stood the dreadful Shock,
Routed their Horse, and left their trembling Phalanx
To yield to him, and call this *Greek* their Conqueror!

Mar. Yet who in all this Host, who thus adore him,
Hath mention'd us amidst their Songs of Triumph?
Where's our Reward for all our Toils and Hazards?
Themistocles is still advanc'd the higher:

Themistocles to Morrow leads our Troops [*Persia!*
To conquer *Greece*! nay more —— Oh Stain to
Xerxes to bind his Faith with holiest Ties,
Prepares inglorious to espouse his Daughter,
To bend, to kneel, and call this Exile Father. [join'd,

Art. Each Hour we wait to hear their Hands are
And may the Gods that watch for *Persia's* Good
Accelerate their Nuptials. —— [Prayer?

Mar. Beware, my Friend! what means the impious

Art. What can I mean but that which makes the
Of all my Prayers, the Ruin of *Themistocles*? [Bulk
For know, when *Artemisia*, who so long [low'd
In Courts and Camps, in Peace and War hath fol-
Great *Xerxes'* Fortunes, hoping still to share
His Crown, and Love, the Guerdon of her Services,
Shall see her Hopes defeated in these Nuptials;
Her Rage and her Despair will set at work
All Engines for her Ruin, and her Rival's.

Mar. I hope it well; thence 'tis perchance we now
Attend her Summons.—Oft she has vow'd their Fall,
Yet still they're safe, and we and *Persia* suffer.

Art. Who can be safe against a Woman's Rage,
When Love and Empire lost inflame her Thoughts,
Love, Scorn, Hate, Vengeance rousing in her Soul?

Let us assist the Labour of her Passions,
And some Event of highest Hope may wait them.

Mar. May Heaven bespeed our Counsels.— Lo!
she comes——

Caria's bright Queen, indignant in her Eyes,
I read the struggling Tumults of her Soul.
Such were her Looks, when on the fatal Day
Of *Salamis*, with Squadrons of huge *Argosies*
She charg'd the dreaded Fleet of curst *Themistocles*.
So bright, so fierce she shew'd when * *Xerxes* cry'd,
My Women fight like Men, my Men like Women!

Enter to them Artemisia.

Arte. 'Tis fix'd! Oh *Persians*, ever doom'd to serve
It is decreed,—the Nuptials, the Disgrace,
The Blot the Stain of *Artemisia's* Life
This Minute are resolv'd.—These haughty Exiles
Must lord it here, must wear the *Persian* Crown,
And stain th' immortal Line, the Throne of *Cyrus*.

Art. Then the last Stroke is giv'n to our Liberty
And *Artemisia's* Fame: They find us Slaves,
And mark us out for Vassalage.—By *Mithra*,
They use us as we merit.—Those who stoop
Like us to willing Bondage, do deserve it!

Arte. 'Tis even so.—Our Faith, our blind Devotion
And tame Submission to the Will of *Xerxes*,
Have urg'd these *Greeks* to such opprobrious Insults.
Hence have they got the Daring to contemn
My Services, my Love, my Crown, my Charms;
My Charms, why name I them?—They are no
Or *Nesiptolema* obscures their Lustre. [more

Mar. Too true.—But say, can *Artemisia's* Soul
Stoop to such vile Oppression? Can you bear
To see your Vows, your Beauty scorn'd for her?

Arte. Scorn'd! scorn'd! who dares to join my Name
with that!

* *Vide Plutarch, the very Words.*

What Woman can bear scorn'd, and scorn'd for her?
For her, a moralizing She-Philosopher,
A Pedant-tutor'd Girl, whose awkward Virtues
Smell of the *Grecian* School; whose lifeless Form,
Who, who but *Xerxes* would compare to mine?

Art. To thine! What sees that all-beholding Eye
Of Heav'n, compar'd to *Artemisia* here?

Arte. My most sincere and ever faithful Friend,
How shall I thank thy Love? — Yet is't not strange
For her, this Thing, this blushing artless Creature!
This Ignorant! Whose Mirror scarce has taught her
Whether she's fair or no — Whose Eyes unskilful
Shine upon all alike, nor ever learnt
The Art, the Heav'nly Husbandry of Beauty,
Yet e'en for her is *Artemisia* still,
Torture and Anguish! still o'erlook'd by *Xerxes*.

Mar. Ungenerous and unjust!

Art. My Soul with Indignation hears your Injuries.

Arte. Then think what mine must suffer! mine
that feels them!

Yielding to her! Destruction! I could lose
Without a Sigh, my Crown, my Life, my Love,
But not to her! not to a worthless Rival,
Without one Charm to countenance her Conquest.

Art. Her Charms ne'er conquer'd *Xerxes*. — 'Tis

Themistocles,

To whom your Hopes and ours are made the Sacrifice.

Arte. Then aim we all our Efforts to tear up
The Minion's rooted Growth. — And therefore,
Has *Artemisia* call'd upon your Loves, [Princes,
That ere these fatal Nuptials are accomplish'd,
We may with general Voice demand of *Xerxes*
That he dismiss these Exiles, or this Day

See our united Hosts desert his Standards. [join you.

Mar. Our Troops resentful of your Wrongs, shall

Art. Be it resolv'd — 'twill shake his firmest Hopes!
Or should this fail us, 'twere not ill design'd,
If haply we could gain the Sun's Arch-Priest,

Old *Bagoas*, when the nuptial Rites are sung,
To feign some direful Omens to o'ercast
That Hour of Hope. — It may avail us highly.

Arte. That be my Care. — To me he owes his Place;
My Power and Interest are the God he worships.
We shall concert this further. — It is whisper'd
This Hour *Themistocles* decrees to free
The *Greeks*, whom our triumphant Arms enslav'd
By our late Victory. — This rash Attempt,
If he goes thro' with't, as I trust he shall,
We will urge home to *Xerxes*, as a Proof
Of his Attachment to the *Grecian* Interest.
He's tim'rous, rash and jealous. — It must shock him. —

Art. It has a Face. — Let us a while retir'd
Weigh cautiously these Hopes. —

Mar. Behold he comes, whose Ruin they do point at

Arte. 'Tis he, the Pageant of the Crowd, who rears
His Head above you all, amid the Heavens,
Like some vast Temple form'd for Adoration,
That veils within some Wonder-working God,
And looks with Scorn on every meaner Edifice,
Oh *Persians*, blush, is this the Shrine you bow to?
Cringe on, you Slaves! fawn, flatter, make him Great,
And raise him high, his Fall shall still be greater.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Themistocles, and Demaratus, Guards, Officers.

Th. These Orders see dispatch'd — and let *Mar-*
donius [Gives Letters, they kneel.
And *Artaban*, with all the Captive *Greeks*
Attend us here.

Offic. We shall observe your Orders.

[*Exeunt some Officers.*

Them. O *Demaratus*, my old Fellow-Exile,
The happy Moments, big with *Athens'* Fate,
Rush hast'ning on: They call, they call our Swords
To reap the plenteous Harvest of my Rage,
And level with the Earth her falling Tow'rs,

Yes,

Yes, 'tis decreed, this Mistress of the Globe,
This little Queen of Nations, shall no more
Oppress the World and me.

[it,

Dem. Her Cruelty deserves, your Wrongs demand
Such ever be the Fate of ill-us'd Power.

Th. Nay, she shall answer all — her Audit's come —
Methinks I hear the guilty Criminal's Groans,
I see her downcast Looks, and baleful Eyes,
That scowl on her vile Chains in deep Despair;
She tears her Hair, she gnashes with her Teeth,
Whilst, liketh' inexorable Judge I stand,
And execute the just Decrees of Heav'n.

And yet — ah! who can trust his Heart, my Friend,
Now that the Gods do arm my Hand with Vengeance,
And list these Hosts by Millions in my Cause,
I mourn, I grieve to think that she must perish —
I find a Calm of Pity stealing on me,
And my wrought Blood, that like some River well'd,
With a full Sea of Rage run salt and brackish,
Seems with the ebbing Tide to droop and sink,
To turn again, and gain its natural Sweetness.

Dem. Do Thoughts like these become the wrong'd

Themistocles?

This Woman's Tale of Pity — Bear my Chidings —
For, 'tis unmanly, e'en to join the Name
Of Pity with such bleeding Injuries.

[ness.

Th. Most true — I see, with Scorn I see my Weak-
Thus to the Winds I give it — Yes, my Friend,
Justice shall have her Course, tho' *Athens* falls
Beneath her dread Decrees, and sinks for ever:
This Day, the Gods shall witness to my Vows,
Of Faith to *Xerxes*, and Revenge on her. [Spirit.

Dem. There spoke indeed the Warrior's injur'd

Th. Can I forget? — O that I could indeed! [Sighs.
Can I forget my barb'rous Country's Conduct;
My Country, (let me name her so no more)
That has disclaim'd my Birth, as I do her;
Renounc'd all Interest in me; paid my Service,

My Toils, my Labours, Watchings, Fains and Sufferings,

With Bonds and Banishment! nay, more, ye Heav'ns!
As tho' she envy'd me the wretched Power
Of bearing Life beneath my weary Woes,
Has set a publick Price upon my Head,
And cast my Blood, accurst and tainted, from her.

Dem. Hard Fate! By *Aristides*, your known Foe,
That was decreed, and thro' the East proclaim'd;
Accus'd of feigned Treasons, tax'd with Crimes
And Plots against the State, absent, unheard,
You were condemn'd, your Family proscrib'd,
Your Palace raz'd to th' Earth, while your poor Infants,
Unhous'd, expos'd to all the warring Elements,
Were forc'd to seek you wand'ring thro' the World.

Them. O thou hast touch'd thoir jarring Notes so strong,

They've rais'd my Soul in Arms to crush the Sorcerers,
And blot my Foes from Earth, as they would me.
Yes, thus abhorr'd, forgotten, and expung'd,
The Day's at Hand when they'll remember me,
When they'll invoke the angry Gods in vain,
And stretch their Hands to them, to me, to save them.
Then, when Destruction hovers o'er their Heads,
And the wing'd Harpy Vengeance girds them fast;
When *Xerxes*' Hosts, like some vast Deluge, rowl
Around their Walls, then shall they find *Themistocles*,
Proscrib'd and doom'd to Death, survives their
Menaces,

And lives to see their haughty Pride laid low.

Dem. Bright shine those Hours — But see, the
Generals bring
The Captive *Greeks* in Chains, to wait your Doom.

*Enter Artaban, Mardonius, and Captives, chain'd
and guarded, with Aristides, disguised in a Slave's
Habit among them.*

Art. Hail to the Favourite of the Gods and *Xerxes*.

Mard. Hail

Mard. Hail to *Themistocles*.

Them. Princes of *Persia*, hail — I have resolv'd
To gain, by generous Treatment, these brave Men,
To join their Swords with ours in *Xerxes*' Cause ;
And therefore are we met — Ye Sons of War!

[to the Grecians.

Ye noble Gleanings of the fore wrought Field,
Whom *Mars* drags haughty chain'd around his Car,
Too well you prov'd your Prowess in the Fight,
To merit these inglorious Bonds — Behold,
Themistocles, your Countryman, and once
Your Fellow-Soldier, opens thus his Arms,
To shield you from Destruction ; to protect
The brave Distress'd, from the rude Wrongs of Power,
And lift your Fate above a base World's Scorn !
Again, lo Fortune courts you ! O receive, [dom,
Receive from me, with Wealth and Fame, your Free-
And under *Xerxes*' Ensigns share the Realms,
The Wealth of conquer'd *Greece* — What ! none to
answer ?

Dem. Speak some one for the rest.

Arist. Sure, thus disguis'd, no Eye knows *Aristides* ;
Then let me speak ere these Plebeian Souls,
Lur'd by his golden Baits, renounce their Country.

[*Aside.*

Know'st thou, *Themistocles*, that these thou speak'st to
Are Men, born honest, free, and brave, as thou art ?
Grecians and Soldiers ! — Men, whose dauntless Souls
Have fought for Glory in the Fields of Death,
And for their Country's Safety stak'd their Blood ?
Dar'st thou then hope, because oppress'd by Fortune,
We are thy Pris'ners now, that these vile Chains
Should bow our Souls so low, that we should pawn
Our sacred Faith to *Xerxes* for his Gold ?

No, *Athens* knows us for her faithful Sons :
Thus low, thus wretched, still we own her Cause,
And firm, unalterably firm to Honour,

We

We stand unchang'd, amidst the Shocks of Fate,
Of Fate and Thee, *Themistocles*. [Danger?

Them. Slave, dost thou know my Power, and thy

Arist. No! but I know thy Weakness, and my
Strength;

Thy worst of Cruelties must end in Death:

An honest Death, more eligible far

Than a base guilty Life that's spent with Shame,

And hir'd by the Hour to hurt my Country!

Hir'd by Gold, Pomp, Place, and wretched Luxury!

Are these thy Arts to win us to betray

Our holiest highest Trust, our Faith to *Athens*?

Tempt *Persian* Slaves with Baits like these, whose
Ne'er knew the Joy of living free and honest. [Hearts

For us, whose Souls are us'd to nobler Views,

We hug our virtuous Woes, and scorn such Villainy.

Them. Who bid this Wrangler speak? — There
was a Day,

When the *Athenians* Love had made this Insolence

Prove fatal to him, but 'tis now no more;

So let it pass amid mine other Injuries.

Be it our honest Comfort, that those Foes,

Who robb'd me of my Fame, have left me still

My Innocence and Patience — Those protect him.

For you my Friends, know what I've urg'd, has
sprung

From Pity for your Fate and Zeal to serve you.

Alas! what need have I of *Grecian* Swords

To venge my Wrongs, for whom the Eastern World

Appears in Arms; but that I still admire

Virtue distressed like yours; and pleas'd would share

My Wealth, Power, Honours, nay, my Glory with
you? —

Nor will I take the Advantage of your Bondage,

To gain you to our Cause; free Minds like yours,

Lost by Constraint, by Gratitude are won:

Behold, the Proof I give you of my Love,

A Proof

A Proof, which Greece shall blushing hear, and tremble ;

While thus, at once, I change your Chains to Freedom. [*Guards unchain them.*]

Capt. Thanks to *Themistocles*, our brave Deliverer!

Arist. I'll wear my Chains [*to the Guards.*]*—*Gods! how can one so brave,

Be yet so false, so cruel to his Country! [*aside.*]

Mardo. Our Wishes are accomplish'd to the full.

Art. This Deed secures our Hopes, and seals his Ruin. [*aside to each other.*]

Let's haste to *Artemisia*. [*Exeunt bowing.*]

Th. You call me your Deliverer ; let those *Greeks*, Who, mov'd with Gratitude, would clear that Debt, Guard with To-morrow's Sun the *Persian* Standard.

One Thing remains, while thus I gain new Friends, By Heav'n's best noblest Gift, by glorious Liberty, I must not leave my ancient Foe unpunish'd.

Whoe'er among you would befriend *Themistocles*, Let him disclose the secret Midnight Haunts, Where *Aristides*, since his late Defeat, Hides his devoted Head, and half the Wealth Of *Athens* shall reward him — Say, who claims This Task of Friendship ?

Captives. None ! none ! none !

Arist. Yes, by my Hopes, I claim it, and with Joy— E'en in the Battle, where thy Sword prevail'd, I saw him as he wav'd his flaming Faulchion, And eccho'd thro' the Field, Appear, *Themistocles*, Here meet the Fate that *Athens'* Laws decree thee.

I saw the eager Zeal with which he strove, Thro' mingling Hosts to hew his Passage to thee, And end thy Triumphs by one vengeful Blow.

I saw him driv'n down the Tide of Battle, With tired Arms stemming in vain the Torrent ; And conscious of his Haunts, before high Noon, Thine Eyes secure of Vengeance shall behold him ;

Con-

Confronted, thou shalt set his Guilt before him,
And prove he wears the Name of *Just* unmerited.

Th. I languish for that Hour, but haste, retire,
[*Exeunt Captives and Aristides.*

The Royal *Xerxes* comes — O! thou, my Soul,
Just to the Lustre of his Love, o'erlook
The Flaws which cloud that Jewel's native Splendor;
Tho' in the borrow'd Majesty of Pomp,
He plays the Monarch, and degrades the Man,
Vain-glorious, tim'rous, fickle, rash and jealous,
Still he's my Friend; and Friendship like the Sun,
Tho' where it shines, it shews each Object plain,
Yet gilds them with a lovely Brightness still,
And warms e'en by Reflection.

*Enter Xerxes gorgeously dress'd; all but Themistocles
fall prostrate before him.* [thee,

Xer. Whence have I lost the Morn, unblest by
Source of my Hopes, thou Father of the War!
Born to my Fame, thro' whom my conqu'ring Arms
Have taught the distant World to own my Power,
And dread my Force — Thou more than Conqueror;
That hast deserv'd the highest Name on Earth,
The Title of my Friend — Thus let me fold
My Hero to my Breast, who ne'er shall know
A Rival there, but lovely *Nesiptolema*. [*Embracing.*

Th. O! ever generous, ever gracious, cease
To over-rate my Services — To you,
To you alone, I owe all that I am,
Or can be; and the poor Returns I've made
E'en like the Tribute of those Realms you've conquer'd,
Serve to confess my Homage, but can ne'er
Discharge the Debt I owe you. [wrong,

Xer. Now, by our Sword, thou hold'st the Ballance
Of sacred Friendship, and a Monarch's Love!
Witness, the Subject World o'er which my Throne
Pre-eminent Rules; by Thee I reign, I conquer —
By thee, by our tremendous Name assisted,

And

And awful Arms, th' *Ægyptian* Princes fell ;
By Thee the *Grecian* Hosts, and *Aristides*,
Inglorious fled, and lost their *Asian* Provinces ;
Nay, more, by Thee I reign in Love unrival'd,
And thou, this Hour, shalt place within my Arms,
My Heart's triumphant Tyrant *Nesiptolema*.

Th. Such Honours are too great for *Grecian* Exiles,
And far out-weigh our Merit, tho' your Love,
Great *Xerxes'* Love, be thrown into the Scale.

Xer. By *Mithra* no—I think them all too small,
To crown such matchless Virtue ——— If the Earth,
The conquer'd Earth, could yield me greater still,
They should be her's and thine. [come

Th. With Actions, not with Words, my Days to
Must answer to such Goodness, that o'er-pays,
So far o'er-pays the Pittance of my Service. [Hopes

Xer. What can o'er-pay the Man, in whom my
Of Vengeance, Glory, Love and Empire live ?
How my swell'd Heart exults, to think this Day,
The great Alliance of our Souls begins.

Already smoak the Altars of the Gods ;
Before whose conscious Shrines, the Priests prepare
Their *Io Hymens*, while with joined Hands,
We call the sacred Powers to bless our Friendship,
And vow Destruction to detested *Athens*. [thee,

Th. Yes, *Xerxes*, by the Gods ! my Heart is with
And doubly tied by Benefits from you, [Vengeance.
And Wrongs from *Athens*, throbs and swells for
Whence stay we then ? — let's hasten and prepare,
And at the Temple seal our sacred Contract ;
And thou, oh *Mars* ! if ere my Sword has done
Deeds high in Fame, beyond my Hopes and Merit,
Now bless thy faithful Vot'ry with Success ;
Let *Xerxes'* Arms the *Grecian* Pride suppress,
And let my base, ungrateful Country see,
She lost herself that Day she banish'd me. [Exeunt.



ACT II. SCENE I.

The Propylæum, or Porch of the Temple of the Sun, in the Camp before Magnesia. Enter Themistocles and Nesiptolema, Guards and Attendants, Virgins in White, crown'd with Garlands.

Th. **W**Hence is this Scene of Tears? shall *Persia* A *Grecian* Exile weep upon the Day [see She mounts her Throne? Shall *Xerxes* thus be met? Last Night I left thee gay amidst thy Virgins, And now—Ye Gods!—give me to know the Cause.

Nesip. My honour'd Lord, forgive a Maiden's Folly, Who looks with Terror on the mighty Task, Duty and Love must set this Day before her. This Day my Heart, my Soul, each Word, each Thought,

Becomes another's Right; to Love and *Xerxes* They must be paid, and set to the Account Which Duty claims, and I but ill may answer. [thee?

Th. Can that which gives me Joy, raise Grief in These Tears have deeper Sources—shew them to me! [thine,

Nesip. What can my Bosom harbour, hid from Where ev'ry weightier Thought thy Care hath sown? Yet do not ask the Motive of my Tears, Which only spring from melancholly Dreamings, And Thoughts that rush on our unguarded Souls, As idle Birds, which wing their wandring Flights Amidst our holiest Temples, where they mix Their empty Musick with our Pray'rs to Heav'n.

Th. Hath Nature then prevail'd above my Precepts,

And

And taught thee that mean Art of fawning Women,
Or Men fram'd like them, Flatt'ry and Dissembling ?
Speak what the Gods and I should hear !—speak Truth,
Truth undisguis'd, and without further Preface ;
Say,—tell me, whence thou art become a Mourner.

Nesip. Then witness Heav'n, my Grief is all for
Lest some ill Fate attend my Royal Nuptials, [thee,
And low subvert that Power they're meant to raise.
Last Night ! (I tremble when I name the Vision)
As pensive on my Bed I watch'd the Hours,
A sudden Lightning blaz'd around my Couch,
In which *Minerva*, *Athens'* Guardian Goddess,
Shone like some Star amidst the glowing Firmament ;
In her right Hand a *Persian* Sabre gleam'd,
Which at my Breast, she aim'd with angry Looks,
And cried, Dye, Traitors, by the *Persian* Sword
Thy Charms have drawn for *Athens'* Overthrow !
Amaz'd, with Shrieks I rais'd my sleeping Virgins,
When strait it vanish'd ; but hath left behind
Terrors my Soul can neither hide nor tell.

Tb. Let Fools and Cowards start at Fancy's Visions,
Thy well-taught Spirit knows these Dreams are bred
From Fumes and Indigestions, that oppress
The Mind, which thus o'er-loaded, still throws off
These Crudities, these Ordures of the Soul :
As such despise them, and in this be firm ;
Those Powers who still befriend oppressed Virtue,
Will crown thy Love, and venge our Wrongs on
Athens.

Nesip. So be it, gracious *Jove* ! and, oh, bespeed
Our ardent Pray'rs, and right my injur'd Father ?
If Heav'n be angry, all my Crime shall be
My Hate to *Greece*, and my fond Love for you.

Tb. Come to my Arms—thou Blessing, whom some
Deity [Embrace.
Kindly threw in the Ballance of my Fate,
To make my Woes seem lightsome—lo ! th' Emperor !
Banish

Banish vain Terrors, let thy Heart make Room
For its great Guest—Love, Empire, Fame are ours !

Enter Xerxes with Guards, Attendants, &c.

Xer. Behold, ye happy *Persians*, tho' like me
You die beholding, where the Queen of Love,
Drest in Ten thousand Glories, comes to grace
The Throne of *Xerxes*—Oh ! my Soul's chief Hope,
Fond as I am, of Glory and Dominion,
If half the Monarchs of the wide-stretch'd Earth,
Would lay their Crowns and Scepters at my Feet,
And bribe me with their Kingdoms from thy
Nuptials,

I would disdain them all !—thou beauteous Excellence !
For once, Ambition should give way to Love,
And own those Eyes are like thy Father's Sword,
Resistless and Invincible.

Nesip. Whate'er I am, I owe to Royal *Xerxes*,
Who took me up friendless, oppress'd and destitute,
From the base Fury of an unjust World,
And made me his ;—to that I owe my Worth ;
And, like rude Ingots, from their Dross refin'd,
I wear your Stamp, and thence derive my Value.

Xer. No, beauteous Maid, thou might'st as well
It is the Worshipper that makes the Gods, [maintain
And not the bright Perfection of their Nature :
No, I beheld, admir'd and lov'd thy Virtues ;
My Soul hath chose thee out, to be her own ;
And I henceforth will triumph in thy Arms,
And ravage o'er thy shining Heaven of Beauty,
With greater Joy, than the all-forming Sun
Rose on the new-made World, warm'd by his Beams,
And bid it bask within its Rays for ever.

Nesip. Poor that I am ! — I scarce have Words to
answer
Your Goodness, and my Gratitude ; ——— but those,
Those few I have, shall all be spent in Pray'rs,
To make me worthy of you.

Xer. And

Xer. And me, exalted as I stand, in Merit,
Above th' Inferior Princes of the Earth,
Worthy of *Nesiptolema*——

Th. These amorous Parleys, better far do suit
The Lover than the Prince; Monarchs like *Xerxes*,
Should live to Empire, tho' they stoop to Love,
Amidst their meaner Cares—— and hark, the Gods!
[*Flourish of loud Musick.*

The Summons of the Gods, auspicious, calls us.

Xer. This Moment at their Altars, seals our Vows,
Lead to the Shrines our Empress—haste, I follow.

[*Exeunt Them. Nesip. and Train, &c.*

Enter Artaban and Mardonius, they whisper
Xerxes. ——

Affairs of vast Importance—let them wait——

Art. Sir, we bring Things of high Concern, im-
porting [hear.

Your Throne, your Fame, perhaps, your Life, to

Xer. Ha!—Life and Fame, are worth the Hero's
Thoughts;

Then let the Priests, nay, let their Gods attend,

And all the Business of the World stand still;

Here I shall give you Audience—speak, and freely.

Art. Thus, lowly, let me bow, and thank your
Goodness, [kneels.

Who offers Truth to Princes, acts their Office

Who feed our Elephants, that oft reject

Their wholesome Food, and tear th' officious Server;

Thus *Xerxes* will not act, nor will he think

The Truths we bring are but the Votes of Faction;

No, he'll regard them, as, indeed, they are,

The Voice of Nations, and the Groans of *Persia*.

Xer. What means this dark Solemnity of Words,

So big with Danger? quick! unfold it to me,

And if some hidden Treason shakes our Throne,

Haste, name it, and *Themistocles* shall guard us.

Mar. *Themistocles*!

C

Art. He

Art. He may, indeed,—e'en as the Viper's Blood
Expels the Poison of his venom'd Tooth ;
He is the Source, whence spring the Woes we speak
He is the Serpent whom your Pity found, [of ;
Chill'd with the wintry Tempest of his Fate,
And foster'd in your Bosom, where he now,
Chear'd by your Love, sits meditating Death,
And broods his Treasons 'gainst the Hand which
fav'd him ?

Xer. Are these the mighty Terrors which you
Is't then *Themistocles* that I'm to fear, [harbour ?
Whose Conquests bleeding fresh, proclaim alike,
His Faith and Friendship to us ?

Art. Can he, then, prove a Friend to *Persia* now,
By whose curs'd Sword, our slaughter'd Countrymen
By Thousands fell, and left their bleached Bones,
Whitening the *Grecian* Fields ? who ting'd the *Hel-*
lespont

With crimson Tides of *Persia's* noblest Blood ?
Whence rose his Fame, but from your fatal Losses ?
Lov'd as he is, 'tis still his daily Sport
To tell his favourite *Greeks* *, that haughty *Xerxes*,
With all his tumid Boasts, is like the Sword-fish,
Who only wears his Weapon in his Mouth,
But has no Heart for Battle—— and shall he,
This Slanderer, this *Greek*, this Foe, this Exile,
Preside o'er all your Hosts, and perpetrate
His yet imperfect Treasons 'gainst your Throne.

Xer. Shew he assaults it—— Words, like those you
mention,
Deserve no Credence : — Name some Fact, some
Existing, independant of your Fears ; [Danger
And if my slow-pac'd Vengeance lags behind,
Proclaim me tardy——

* *Vide* Plutarch.

Art. Your

Art. Your Royal Word is pass'd, and thus I claim it;
And here to all-beholding Heav'n and *Xerxes*,
Arraign *Themistocles* a secret Traytor,
A Foe to *Persia*, and a Friend to *Athens*.

Xer. Urge this with Proofs, not Words; let some
known Act
Evince his Treachery.

Art. And such I shall produce: For know, this Day
Of all the Captive Hosts, the rising Sun
Beheld in Bonds, this base, unfaithful Exile
Hath not left one to grace your Royal Triumph,
To publish *Athens*' Loss, and *Xerxes*' Glory;
All are enfranchis'd, while, e'en in our Presence,
The Traytor mourn'd to see his *Greeks* our Pris'ners.

Xer. How! — free my Captives! — but I know 'tis
false;
By Heav'n, I say, he did not, durst not do it!

Art. By Heav'n he did, he durst — nay, more, he
dares

Add to the Guilt of setting free your Foes,
The keeping you, his sacred Lord, in Bondage.

Mard. By *Mithra*, true! These Eyes beheld the
one,
And ev'ry Eye but yours, perceives the other.

Xer. 'Tis false! or else the Race of Men are Villains,
And he the first of all the faithless Tribe!
It shocks Belief! or, if it must have Credence,
Say, wherefore did he free them?

Art. Nay, ask the Traytor that, and bid him own
The Truth he cannot hide—because they're *Greeks*,
His Countrymen, his Brethren, and ally'd
To all his Treasons! born the natural Foes
Of *Persia*, and the Bane of *Xerxes*' Glory.

Xer. My Doubts distract me, and I know not
which
Should first be answer'd—haste! revoke his Orders!

Mard. Impossible—the Liberty he gave them,
Came not by Halves—their Safety and their Flight,

He hath provided for—they're now dispers'd,
To crowd the Standards of detested *Greece*,
And drench their Swords anew, in *Persian* Blood.

Xer. Furies and Hell! what, arm my Foes against
me?

This Proof would stagger e'en the firmest Soul,
And all at once, calls home unto my Breast
A Thousand banish'd Fears, that wisely counsell'd
To trust a Foe, when reconcil'd, with Caution.

Art. Ye guardian Gods, that watch for *Persia's*
Safety,

I thank you, that no longer one false *Greek*
Can over-poize you all——

Xer. Could we,—could *Xerxes*, be deceiv'd far?
Oh 'tis too much! for my own Peace, I strive
To disbelieve it; for if he's a Traytor,
Whom can I trust again?

Art. Let my great Master trust to those, whose
Fealty

Propp'd up your Throne, when this curs'd *Greek*
o'er-urn'd it,

To them, and *Artemisia*, and prefer
Their Faith unshaken, and her Love unfeign'd,
To false *Themistocles* and *Nesiptolema*.

Xer. What, part with *Nesiptolema*! alas!
It wo't not be—and yet, if he be false,
How dare I trust, how can I think her true?

Art. Well urg'd—besides, a generous Prince, like
Xerxes,

Will think on, and reward the Truth, the Suff'rings
The Pangs of *Artemesia's* faithful Passion:
But see, she comes, the glorious Charmer comes,

*Enter Artemesia and her Train, having overheard
them.*

To claim your Heart, and grace the Crown, her
Arms

So well protected, and her Charms deserv'd.

Xer. Where

Xer. Where shall I hide my Blushes, lovely Queen,
Too lovely, and too injur'd for my Peace?

Say, how can I atone my past Neglects;
Or, with this Bankrupt Heart, repay the Debt,
The boundless Debt of Love, and Truth, I owe you?

Arte. Speak thus, thus kind, and you'll o'er-pay it
all,

Call me your Queen, restore me to your Heart,
And drive these Exiles thence, who use their Power
To free your Foes, and to enslave your Friends.

Xer. Most gladly I would do it — for I fear,
I fear, alas! *Themistocles* betrays me;
And well, too well! my Heart recalls your Faith,
Your Love, your Truth, your Services before me.
And yet (ah pity! and forgive my Weakness)

When I reflect on lovely *Nesiptolema*,
Her Innocence, her Charms, her heav'nly Beauties,
I would in vain—what would I? — Gods! I find,
I would not, cannot, dare not live without her!

Arte. Must I bear this? — racking, tormenting
Thought!

Then must I still be sacrific'd to her?
My Constancy, my Love! all, all neglected!
For her! for her, this Daughter of a *Greek*;
This dark, this subtle, new-discover'd Traytor!

Mar. You cannot paint him blacker than his Deeds.

Art. His Treasons stand confess'd, and evident.

Xer. He's absent, and unheard, and may be innocent;

His Faith is held suspected, not condemn'd:
Summon him hither—let him stand impleaded,
And clearly answer or confess his Crime.

Mar. A vain Attempt!

Art. Useless to him, or fatal to our Safeties.

Arte. Has not his Life been one continued Scene
Of Loss to *Persia*, and Disgrace to *Xerxes*?
Doth not this last plain Proof attest it all?
But what avails it? when the Gods have stopt

The Ears of *Xerxes*, when his Heart rebels
Against his once-lov'd Queen, his Friends, his Interest?

Art. Believe not so. — *Xerxes*, my Royal Lord,
Can, like a God, look thro' the Hearts of Men,
Discerning Truth from Falshood. — In his Eyes
I read the mounting Passions of his Soul.
His Heart relenting hears our faithful Pray'rs,
While *Persia's* Genius weeps and calls aloud,
Save, shield me from the *Greek* that has undone me!

Xer. Where would you lead me, Friends? methinks
I stand

On cracking Ice, and know not where to place
My Foot secure of Safety!

Arte. Irresolute and weak! — Banish this Traytor,
And ev'ry Danger vanishes. — Restore,
Restore these Princes to their high Commands,
And let me reign thron'd in your Heart unrivall'd,
'Then you'll consult your Safety, nay your Glory,
And *Greece* shall feel from our united Arms,
'That Fate which now you impotently menace.
For know, ungrateful *Xerxes*, we are vow'd
This Day for ever to forsake your Standards,
To own your Cause no more, unless *Themistocles*
And all his House be driven out to Banishment.

Xer. Ha! Is't possible? What leagu'd against me?

Art. Upon those Terms our Troops and Swords
are yours.

Mar. With our best Services, — when he's destroy'd.

Xer. By Heav'n tis plain, — a form'd Conspiracy!
Confess'd and glory'd in! Is this your Zeal
For *Persia*, that proceeds from Thirst of Power
And vain ambitious Hopes? — By *Arimanius*,
My Faith had almost stagger'd with their Treasons,
I had almost forgot the Vows, the Services,
Of Great *Themistocles*, who at the Altars
Attends with *Nesiptolema*, to join
Our Hands and Hearts in one eternal Friendship!
And am I here contriving his Destruction,

And

And list'ning to the Envy of his Foes?
Away! — It is too much. — Here, to the Gods
Your Accusations I renounce, and all
Your Menaces, your base Desertion scorn'd,
Here vow to trust my Fame, Power, Empire with
him!

Arte. Then here, ungen'rous *Xerxes*, I renounce
Those great Alliances we once contracted!
No more my Hosts shall guard the Throne of *Cyrus*,
Nor my Love 'fend thee from the *Grecian* Arms.
Haste! bid my Troops withdraw. — Here I abjure

[To her Train, some of whom go out.]

All League, all Amity with faithless *Xerxes*. ———

Xer. Is this the Voice of Love and *Artemisia*?
Think better of it; for with half my Realms,
I would redeem your Friendship. ———

Arte. Such Bribes may purchase *Grecian* Hearts;
but mine,

To Empire cold, to Love alone aspir'd.

That lost, — ungrateful, dare you own 'tis lost?

What Joy is left but what Revenge can give me?

By *Mithra*, yes! I'll cause such Wars, such Ravage

Shall shake your *Persia*, nay, the Eastern World,

As with an Earthquake. — Yes, perfidious Prince,

Since you no more can hear my Name with Love,

My Arms, Ten Thousand Plagues, Ten thousand Woes

Shall make you think on it, and me with Terror!

[Exit Artemisia]

Xer. Traytors! you've rais'd the Storm against
my Peace;

Haste, — calm it; or I'll sweep you from the Earth,
Like Dust before the Whirlwind. ———

Art. Urg'd by no Motives, but our Country's
Good ———

Xer. 'Tis false! be dumb, you've dar'd to rush
between

A Monarch and his Love. ——— I see at last,

And scorn your little Arts. — But know, *Themistocles*

Shall triumph o'er your Envy.—Yes, this Moment
Shall end my Nuptials, and confirm his Power!

[Exit Xerxes.

Art. He's gone, and with him all our Hopes to rise
Upon this Exile's Fall.—Our fruitless Labour
Strives to confine the Torrent of his Power,
And makes it swell the higher.

Mar. I hate these Plots.—Keen Swords make twice
the Riddance ;

Let's boldly join our Troops with *Artemisia's*.

Art. Be not too rash.—Revenge should still be
calm.——

Let's seek the Queen, and wait th' approaching
Omens ;

But see, the Temple opens.——Let's retire.——

[Exeunt *Art. and Mar.*

S C E N E opens, shewing a magnificent **TEMPLE**
of the **SUN**, finely illuminated. An Altar
gilt ; Priests and Choristers in Cloth of Gold. Mu-
sick vocal and instrumental ; Themistocles, Demaratus
and Courtiers attending : Xerxes holds Nefiptolema
by the right Hand, both crown'd at the Altar,
perform the Persian Rites of Marriage in dumb Show,
the Courtiers, Priests, &c. all kneeling, and then the
Chief Priest concludes the Ceremony with this Song.

Mithra, thou who favourest Love,
Still shine on them from above ;
With Fame and Glory blest his Arms,
With endless Beauty grace her Charms :
And as these Flames still on thine Altars shine,
For ever let theirs last, and burn like thine.

[At these Words the Temple appears darken'd, and the
Flames on the Altar go out ; all start surpriz'd.

Xer. Mighty Gods, are thus my Vows regarded?

Nes. Avert this Omen, Heaven!

The. Ye

The. Ye Pow'rs, since Vice unmenac'd 'scapes your
Frowns,

How can these Rites of virtuous Love offend you?

Xer. Amazement thrills me.—Oft I've heard these
Omens

Are but the casual Accidents of Time;

If these be such, whence borrow they their Terrors?

Can Heav'n be angry when its first great Care,

When *Xerxes* is possess'd of all his Wishes,

Of all its Goodness could bestow, or ev'n

My high Deservings claim?—I'll not believe it.—

Let the loud Clarion bid the Heavens put on

Their better Looks, and ev'ry God in Smiles

Propitious bless th' Alliance we've confirm'd.

[*Loud Musick.*

The. High Heav'n bespeed and prosper it.—

Xer. Here to the conscious Pow'rs our right Hands
join'd, [Both kneel at the Altar.

Irrevocably join'd, I seal my Vow,

Still to pursue ungrateful *Greece* with War,

'Till I've reveng'd the Wrongs of great *Themistocles*,

'Till suppliant she shall stoop beneath my Sword,

Bend to our Prowess, and atone her Crimes.

The. Then hear, thou Sun, and witness to my
Faith,

Thus vowing here, that 'till the Grave entombs me,

While *Xerxes'* warlike Ardour calls me onwards,

I never will look back.—My Hand, my Sword

Shall still pursue ungrateful *Greece* with Vengeance,

Till humbl'd and subdu'd she bends before him,

And adds new Glories to the Arms of *Xerxes*.

Nes. Then hear me, Heav'n, nor scorn my faithful
Prayer; [Kneels.

Oh bless this great Alliance, bind it firm

With ev'ry holy Tie of Love and Friendship;

As the fix'd Stars still let it shine resplendent,

Calm and unmov'd, amidst the Worlds fierce Tem-
pests!

[All rise.

Xer. It

Xer. It is enough ; the holy Rites are done :
 Thro' all our Hosts proclaim a solemn Festival.
 This Day we give to Joy, to Love and Peace,
 And all the Luxury of sportive Riot.
 To-morrow's Dawn begins our March for *Greece*,
 Whilst we, my Queen, like *Mars* and *Venus* join,
 To grace the Triumphs of the glorious War.
 Again my Navies shall the Ocean hide,
 And scourge and lash the Billows as they ride,
 Despise the Tempest, and oppress the Tide.
 Again I'll shake the Strength of *Greece*, and spread
 Her Plains with Millions of the mighty Dead :
 Again my Hosts shall drink her Rivers dry ;
 Her Troops shall bend, her firm-wedg'd Phalanx fly.
Themistocles, like Fate, shall lead the Way,
 'Till round the conquer'd Earth I stretch my Sway,
 And ride triumphant o'er the Earth and Sea.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



ACT III. SCENE I.

*The Field before the Royal Pavilion, by the Temple of
 the Sun.*

Enter Mardonius and Artaban.

Mar. **A**LL ! all's o'erturn'd.—Spite of your Plots,
 your Omens,
 The Nuptials are accomplish'd, and our Hopes,
 That aim'd so high, like Arrows shot to Heav'n,
 Return with Danger on our menac'd Heads,
 And threaten Ruin to us in their Fall.

Art. Where is the Help ? When every Engine fails
 That Heav'n or Earth could lend to shake his Power ?

Mar. All's

Mar. All's fail'd indeed. — Ye Stars! What unjust
Deity

Holds out the Ballance of our Fate and his,
That thus he weighs us down?

Art. By Heav'n the aking Thought lies gnawing
here,

And like a Canker eats my Heart, and drinks
The vital Blood within me. — *Persia's* Gods
Forfake her, and each Road we turn to hurt him
Stand up in Arms against us in the Gap,
And make these Dangers which we raise, the Steps
To his Ambition, to exalt him higher.

Mankind's in League against us. — From these Heights
Lo, how the Field is throng'd with revelling Soldiers,
Who, crown'd with Garlands, sing this Exile's Con-
quests.

Mar. Curse on the senseless Herd, with how much
Noise

Their blind Devotion thanks the Gods, who smile
To hear them call their heaviest Woes their Blessings.
See how the blazing Altars fill the Plain,
Which smook with Hecatombs of slaughter'd Beasts,
That, like our Country, pay with their Destruction
For these curs'd Nuptials, and the Rabble's Joy.

Art. Too true, indeed. — Yet still we've one Re-
source

To cure their Folly; for, I hope, the March
And falling off of *Artemisia's* Troops,
Conjoin'd with ours, (when this Fit of Joy
Cool'd with the Night, makes our Attempt more safe,)
May, like a sudden Tempest, cause these Swarms
To hive again, and suddenly refuse
To stir, until the *Carian* Queen returns
To head their armed Bands.

Mar. I hope it well. — Lo, Westward from these
Plains

Already her wing'd Squadrons blaze th' Horizon,
And, like a flaming Torrent, pour around

Their

Their streaming Columns on the dusty Field :
Lo ! lo ! they move ! — They leave thy Camps, Oh
Persia !

They bend this Way. — How their Arms glare ! their
Courfers
Neigh in their Strength, and sprightly spurn the
Ground.

Art. The firm Batallions march. — The beaten
Cymbal

Strikes on my Heart, and calls up Life within me.
But see the Queen, like some immortal *Amazon*
Leads on her banded Powers, and from on high,
Amid her Chariot, deep emboss'd with Gold,
And flaming with the Diamonds lucid Rays,
Heads the vast Squadrons in their ranged Files.
She comes ! she comes ! bespeed her Course, ye
Heav'ns !

Mar. Fate is in Motion for us once again,
But, lo, the Queen descending from her State,
Moves onwards to this Ground :
She comes to chide us, that our tardy Troops
Act not in concert with her ——— I cou'd wish
You would, for once, throw off your cautious Counsels,
And, all our Forces join'd, retreat together.

Art. I doubt such Measures suit not with our
Strength,
Nor with the ticklish Hour of the Time,
And the mad Soldiers Revels. — Hail, great Queen. —

*Enter Artemisia arm'd as an Amazon, Guards, Officers,
all arm'd.*

Arte. Are these your Vows to join my brave Re-
treat ?

Wear you the Names of Soldiers, and forget
The sacred Ties of Honour ? ——— Are the Spirits
Of the old *Persians* bury'd in their Graves,
That none dare rise to right me ? ———

Art. Great

Art. Great Queen, ere now we'd join'd you ; but
you see

The Soldier, drown'd in Wine, enjoys the Festival,
And call'd to Arms, should we command their March,
It might produce a rash Revolt from Discipline.

Arte. Is this a Time to pause, and preach up
Dangers ?

They should be weigh'd before, or now despis'd ;
Your Doubts begin too late, your Fears too early.
But know, to name my Wrongs would catch Mens
Hearts,

Where they are Men, and draw off Hosts to right me !

Art. Most true — but yet to Day th' Attempt
shews rash,

Ill suits the Time, and I could wish you'd wait —

Arte. Is it for me to wish, and wait for Vengeance,
Which were it now within my Grasp, and here,
Would almost seem to come too late to right me.

No, let us bid Adieu to lazy Wishes,
And idle Prayers, begot by Sloth and Impotence,
And turn to Arms, and Action —

Mard. We only would propose it as an Hope
Of likeliest Consequence, That —

Arte. I tell you, Princes, *Artemisia's* Soul
Was never fram'd to hope, but to enjoy !
By Heav'n, my Spirit match'd with Clods like yours,
Such praying, longing Loiterers, is cramp't,
Like the free Soul chain'd down to Earth and Body.
Assert your Wrongs, be willing Slaves no more ;
Bid your shrill Trumpets sound a quick Retreat
To all your Troops, which join'd with mine, will shake
The Soul, the Strength of *Xerxes*, and his Exiles.

Mard. Our Hearts are yours — Our Swords
have slept too long
By their wrong'd Masters Sides — Before the Sun
Gain its Meridian Height, beneath your Banners
Our rang'd Hosts shall march —

Art. Be

Art. Be it resolv'd ! Now Fate befriend or end us :
The Dye is thrown, our Fortune is at Stake,
And all is set upon the Moment's Hazard.

Arte. Where is the Hazard, unto Souls resolv'd
To perish or perform ? — What should mean
These *Grecian* Slaves Attendance — Haste, and meet
me — [Exit Artemisia.

Mard. We follow, tho' we fall —

[Exeunt different Ways.

Enter Aristides disguised in a Slave's Habit, and Demaratus.

Dem. Whoe'er thou art, whose Habit speaks a Slave,
Thy Words confess the free-born *Grecian* Spirit,
Wrestling with Fate, and keeping far at Bay
The Woes that would oppress thee — Yet be told,
Now, to converse in secret with *Themistocles*,
When, at the Royal Feast, he sits on high,
Is a Request would be refus'd to Princes.

Arist. Be't so: I see your Princes live and act
The Slaves of Force, and all-oppressing Power:
But know, a *Greek*, tho' dragg'd to Chains indignant,
Still dares exert the Empire of his Soul,
And owns no Power but the Laws and Reason.
Yet once again be told, were I as low
As Fate, or the mean Fears of Fate could lay me,
I bring a Message of such high Concernment,
That were he now in Council with the Gods,
Dividing out the Empires of the World,
He might lay by his State, and give me Audience.

Dem. Thy Words are hid in Clouds, and like the
Voice
Of *Jove*, when Heav'n is mov'd, and the Earth shaken,
Thunder amidst the Darkness — Speak, unfold them —

Arist. Let it suffice to know, that what I bring
Suits only him to hear, and me to speak ;
Which bid him haste, and learn — If he neglects
The Summons, I can only lose these Moments,
Mispend

Mispent with Thee, and a few honest Prayers;
The Gods may find some better way to answer —

Dem. Thy Sternness looks like Virtue—wait awhile—
And I shall bring him, whose wide Reach of Thought
Shall fathom all thy Depths— [Exit Demaratus.

Arist. 'Tis fix'd! ye Fates, this Hour I shall learn
How far the just and upright Views of Virtue
May dare to hope your Favours— Righteous Powers,
Ye Guardians of my Country's Fate, bespeed,
And guide me, while I tread these dangerous Paths:
And Oh, if ever *Aristides* fought
Your Cause, the Cause of Truth and Virtue here,
Prosper him now, and let my Words pierce thro'
The proud, the swelling Heart of this *Themistocles*;
That, like some Sore, lanc'd by the Surgeon's Hand,
It may disgorge the Venom lodg'd within.
'Tis true, he holds me his determin'd Foe;
But, if his Hate extends not past the Grave,
With Joy my Blood shall seal the Peace of *Athens*;
A trivial Price! For what is Life, ye Powers,
If *Greece* be conquer'd, and her Sons enslav'd?

Enter Themistocles and Demaratus.

Th. What art thou? that hast dar'd, with busy
Zeal,

To interrupt the publick Joys and mine?
Are there not Hours enough in Life for Care,
That this great Sabbath of my Soul must lose
Its Privilege of Peace? — Know'st thou, this Day
I pay to Joy, To-morrow to Revenge,
The Business of the World, Revenge, and Glory?

Arist. I know it well; and therefore am I come,
Like thy good Genius, watchful of thy Fate,
To wake thy Soul, which, on the steepy Precipice
Of thy high Fortune, sleeps supine, and haply
May, dizzy'd with the giddy Heights thou'st gain'd,
Fall down, thy Fame thine Honour lost for ever.

Them. Say'st

Them. Say'st thou? speak out — thou shalt be answer'd nobly —

Arist. I cannot, till we're private.

Them. Fear not — this Man is as myself — my Friend,

Long try'd and known; my better Half of Soul.

Arist. The less I care to trust him — I've to speak, What will demand thy most abstracted Soul, And claim the Gods, and Thee, sole Auditors.

Them. And we will hear thee fully — leave me with him —

Dem. Think better on't — This may be some Affassine, Desp'rate, and arm'd against your Life.

Them. Be't so — I see no Hosts he brings to aid him, He's but a Man, and has a Man to cope with: Leave us alone — And know, when I can fear Ought but the Gods, I am no more *Themistocles*.

[Exit Demaratus.]

Now speak — unfold thyself, and thy high Business. Whose Slave art thou?

Arist. It matters not; but know, whate'er I am, I am no Slave to *Persia*, like *Themistocles*; No Slave to *Xerxes*, and oppressive Tyranny: I have not sold myself to the base Views Of foul Ambition, and the Thirst of Power; And tho' I wear these servile Marks of Bondage, I'm free, and own no other Lord on Earth, But Reason, and the Gods, from whom I hold it.

Them. What means this daring Preface? Wretch, what wouldst thou?

Arist. I would be what I was, and hope to die A free-born *Grecian*, born to act, and think, As suits the noble Being of a Man. I would, that thou shouldst dare to be *Themistocles*, To be thyself! to reassume thy Reason, And wear that high-raised Name, which grac'd Thee once,

The Boast! the Prop! the Friend of thy brave
Country!

But O, vain Hope! thy Power, thy Pride, thy
Passions,

Are all in Arms against me — Yet I come,
With Truth, with Reason and the Gods, to friend,
To take a nearer Prospect of thy Soul,
And boldly lay great *Athens'* Wrongs before Thee.

Them. Rush not upon thy Death — my Hand is
arm'd. [half drawing.]

Arist. True, with thy Sword — but I am arm'd
with Innocence,

Less penetrable than the Steel-ribb'd Coats
That harness round thy Warriors — O *Themistocles*,
Thy Sword is blunt, and thy strong Arm is Sinewless
To Souls like mine, who in an honest Death
Behold no Terrors like a guilty Life,
Blotted with Wrongs, Injustice, and Oppression,
Daring and great as Thine —

Them. Vile Wretch! Behold how calm the guilt-
less Soul

Can smile at Malice — be my Scorn thy Safety.
Thou'st learnt among thy free-born *Greeks* to think
Slander and Envy are the Patriot's Virtues;
Therefore bark on! rail! name that Act, that Thing,
Which can attain my Fame with such Dishonours.

Arist. I will — Think of that Field besmear'd with
Blood,

When thy fell Sword loaded th' *Ægyptian* Plain
With the red Carnage of the vanquish'd *Greeks*,
Thy murder'd Brethren — Think! recall the Hour,
When choak'd with Gore, and gash'd with gaping
Wounds,

They cry'd in vain, *Themistocles*, have Mercy!
Save, save thy Kindred Tribes, and stop the Slaughter!

Th. Slanderer, 'tis false, most false! My pierced
Heart

Bled at their Cries, and my fond Eyes pour'd Tears,

Fast as their Wounds stream'd Blood — Thro' the
mix'd Hosts

I rush'd, I flew, and sav'd the Lives of Thousands.

Arist. Yes, to reserve them for new Woes, new
Injuries,

To lead them boastful to adorn thy Triumphs,
And shew thy *Persian* Slaves, a Sight, before
Unknown, the *Grecians* chain'd and bound — O
Heaven!

Where slept, that Day, the Soul of this *Themistocles*,
That Mercy could not wake it! Lo, these Bonds

[*shakes his Chains.*]

That rattle in Thine Ears; 'tis Thou hast ty'd them:

Are these the due Rewards of all my Toils,

For fighting for my Country in the Field?

For our dear native Soil, the Land of Liberty;

For *Greece*, the favourite Nation of the Gods:

When, like a Robber, Thou o'er-match'd our Strength,
And tore my dearest Wealth, my Freedom, from me!

Them. If that were Guilt, that Guilt is wip'd away,
Since he, who tied those Bonds, did loose them too,
Pity'd your Suff'rings, and restor'd your Freedom.

Arist. At last you did so — true — but on such
Terms,

That I am come to render back thy Gifts,
And tell thee I prefer my Chains before them.

Think'st thou, *Themistocles*, thy unjust Shackles,
Can bow a *Grecian* Soul to stoop so low,

To guard thy Tyrant's Standards; to unloose

The everlasting Bonds that ought to tie

The brave Man to his Country, to his Conscience?

To bribe him, with his Freedom, to embrace

The Slav'ry of Hell; and like the Fiends,

Condemn'd to all the Stings of horrid Guilt,

Wage savage Conflict, and unnatural War,

E'en with that Power, whence they deriv'd their
Being?

Ah no! Such Terms disgrace the gen'rous Views,

For

For which alone, *Grecians* are wont to live,
Or bravely choose to die —

Them. Go, get thee hence—begone — (The Ser-
pent's Tongue,

Hath with its Venom pierc'd my Heart, and thrill'd
The boiling Flood that warm'd it [*aside.*] Have
done — away —

My Sword hath drunk too deep of *Grecian* Blood,
Why should it blush with Thine?

Arist. Because I am thy Country's stedfast Friend,
And ever wish'd Destruction to her Foes ;

And therefore most to Thee — Nay more, because
I'll turn a Traytor for the Bribes you promis'd,
And place within thy Power, thy stubborn Foe ;

This hated *Aristides* — [*throws off his Disguise.*

Tb. Ha! — By the Gods, 'tis he! — I've found
mine Enemy. [*starts surpriz'd, Sword half drawn.*

By Heav'n, I think I fear him — or my Wrath
Hath watch'd itself to Drowfulness — I've, ere now,
Beheld Fate perching on my Foeman's Sword,
And hov'ring round mine Head—I have seen Dangers,
As near resembling Death, as mighty Rivers,
Ere they be past, do the vast Ocean's self:

Yet never did my Heart beat so appall'd

As now, to see Thee here, unarm'd, and helpless.

Arist. Thus sure, 'at *Minos'* Judgment Seat shall
stand

The Innocent and Guilty ; one o'erwhelm'd
With conscious Shame, the other Bold and Dauntless!
Whence loiters thus thy Sword ? I thought, ere this,
It would have pierc'd my Breast — Behold I lay
It open to thee — Strike fiercely, as thou didst
In *Egypt's* Fields, when thy Revenge insatiate,
Made half the *Grecian* Matrons Childless.

[*Sword sheath'd.*

Them. My Heart pleads for thee — and thy
Virtue charms me —

And yet—beware — Thou know'st I am a Man,

A Man, whose Spirit, as the Thunder turns
The gen'rous Wine, is four'd by his Wrongs,
Sore wrought and fretted by imbitt'ring Injuries.
Be wise! beware — know thou'rt my fellest Foe!

Arist. I am — because thou art thy Country's
Enemy;

Bate me that Name, there's not that Man on Earth,
Whose Virtues lodge more neighbour'd to my Soul.

Them. Hast thou not sign'd the fatal Roll that
banish'd me?

Absent, condemn'd my House, Wealth, Fortune,
Family:

Hast thou not set a Price upon my Head,
As for a Publick Robber, and proclaim'd,
The weighted Gold, for which my Blood shall sell,
Branding my Name with Traytor?

Arist. This *Athens* did for Thee, and I for *Athens*.
Tho' witness, Heav'n, when the harsh Doom was past,
What Tears did wash the publick Ways of *Athens*;
What Groans did shake the Temples of the Gods,
To see thee so condemn'd — Thou who hadst stood
The Bulwark, and lov'd Champion of her Safety:
The Safeguard, Ornament, and Praise of *Greece*!
But, who can blame the Parent, when his Son
Strikes at his Life, to stand on his Defence,
And stab the Paricide who seeks his Ruin?

Th. Was I that Paricide? — All-knowing Gods!
Judge you betwixt me, and my thankless Country!
Have not my Prayers been paid for her Prosperity?
When did she grieve, that ever I rejoyc'd?
When did she triumph, and my Spirit mourn?
When fled her Foes, but when my Sword pursu'd
them?

When did they conquer, but when I was gone?
Have not my Youth, my Manhood, and mine Age
Been wasted in her Service, to defend
Her Liberties, Possessions, nay, those Laws
Which now she turns to banish, and destroy me!

Arist. I

Arist. I see you're mov'd, but Truth must not
be smother'd,

You know, *Themistocles*, you know your Banishment
Was drawn on you, because you stood suspected
Of plotting with * *Pausanias* 'gainst thy Country;
Which, since thy covert Flight, to *Persia's* Tyrant,
And joining with him in enslaving *Greece*,
Have but too well confirm'd ———

Th. Thy Zeal misleads thee — therefore I forgive
thee ———

But know, if I did fly, I fled for Life;
For the poor fond Desire that runs thro' all,
Of breathing here a few toil'd Moments longer,
And letting *Greece* behold my spotless Innocence.
For if my Heart, ere tainted with his Treasons;
If ere my Soul thirsted for *Athens'* Blood;
If, under the keen Anguish of my Suff'rings,
The Smart of Persecution's Iron Rod,
And all the Wrongs an human Soul could feel,
If *Athens* held not still her Grasp within,
Stole half my Prayers, and almost all my Sorrows,
Dart here, ye Gods, your hottest Bolts of Vengeance!
Oh Nature thou art strong — too strong and busy.

[weeps sullenly and groans.

Arist. Then pardon Heav'n, and Thou, that so I
wrong'd thee. [kneels.

Ye Powers, he weeps! the injur'd Hero weeps! [rises.
The Deluge of his Grief o'erwhelms his Soul!
Oh let me join my Tears with thine, *Themistocles*;
These Drops be sacred to our Country's Peace.
No more my Foe! my Friend! my Soul's great
Lord!

Enter my Heart, thou'rt an *Athenian* still.

[weeps and embraces.

Them. I am — I am — I am an injur'd one!

* Vide Nepos, Plutarch.

Arist. Injur'd, indeed, but generous, and forgiving.
 Nay, I will wrestle with thee e'en to Death,
 'Till I prevail, 'till from this Tyrant's Side,
 I draw, tear, drag thee to defend thy Country.

Them. Oh that thou couldst — how happy were
Themistocles!

But ah, hard Sentence — it must never be!

Arist. Where is the Let? — When once the Soul
 revolts,

All other Ties are gone! Oh speak, *Themistocles*,
 Bound, as thou art, to *Xerxes*, couldst thou see,
 Say, couldst thou see, thy native Soil enslav'd,
Athens involv'd in Flames, her Fields in Blood;
 Her Citizens murder'd, and her Laws abolish'd;
 Her Virgins ravish'd, and her Youth in Bondage:
 Nor give a Tear to mourn, an Hand to help her?

Them. Say rather, could this *Athens* see me thus
 An out-cast Exile, loath'd, traduc'd, defam'd,
 My Fortunes shipwreck'd, and my Children thrown,
 Expos'd to the sharp Rigours of the World,
 Nor once repent, nor give one pitying Tear,
 One friendly Call, to say, Return, *Themistocles*,
 Return, possess thy ancient Fame, and Honours.

Arist. She had, she would, but that she knew thy
 Rage,
 And fierce Resentment, would reject and scorn her.

Them. Ah no — one Word had call'd me back, and
 sav'd her,
 My Soul had quit her high Pursuits of Fame,
 Like the mann'd Hawk had hast'ned to the Lure,
 And list'ned to the human Voice with Joy.

Arist. Then lo, how *Athens*, and the Gods do
 answer thee; [gives him a Parchment.
 Read there, a Publick Act, my Care procur'd thee,
 Reversing thy hard Sentence — with one Voice,
 Demanding thy Return, again to lead
 Her Armies forth, and guard thy Country's Safety.

Them. Ha! —

Nesip. Whence is the Doubt? thou know'st, thou know'st I am not.

Tb. I doubt my self, not thee—for I, my Daughter, Am chang'd so much, perhaps, thou scarce can'st know me;

I'm turn'd the Friend, no more the Foe of *Athens*,
She hath restor'd my Fame, regain'd my Heart,
And I have vow'd to seal her Peace with *Xerxes*,
And join thy Prayers with mine, to bind it sure.

Nesip. Alas! I tremble for the dreadful Consequence.

Oh say! speak! whence proceeds this wond'rous Change?

Tb. From Reason, and from him——behold this Man,

Whom thus I fold unto my Heart, and hail
With the first Name 'mongst Men, a faithful Friend;
But a few Moments since, he was th' abhorr'd
And hated *Aristides*——

Nesip. Still hold that Man abhorr'd, who gives such Counsels,

To hazard, for ungrateful *Athens'* Peace,
My Royal *Xerxes'* Friendship, nay, his Love,
(If, blushing, I may use so kind a Name,
To *Athens'* Royal Foe)—or, grant, that Love
Must yield to haughty Honour, is not mine
(I dare not mention yours) tied strictly down,
To serve great *Xerxes*, and detest his Enemies?

Tb. Mistake me not — I would be heard, and calmly.

Nesip. If 'tis displeasing to you, I'll be silent;
But oh! if *Xerxes'* Love, and *Athens'* Int'rest,
Be ballanc'd 'gainst each other, shall, I doubt,
'To give one Tear, to turn the Beam for him?
Why name I him? for Duty, Fame, and Honour!
Oh! can we e'er forsake him? Oh! bethink,
My honour'd Sire, to what vast Heighths, the Flood
Of his high Love hath rais'd us.

Tb. I've

Tb. I've not forgot it—no, my Child, 'tis that
Which sets me firm in Hope, and bids me speak
With Courage, to prevent our Country's Bondage :
Say, can my Sword pursue her, when repentant
She calls for Mercy from me? — can I live
By *Athens'* Ruin, working out my Way
Into the World, most Viper-like, by gnawing
E'en thro' my Mother's Bowels?

Nesip. I know not ought of that ; but what I do,
My Father shall forgive me that I speak.

I know, by all th' endearing Ties of Love
And sacred Honour, we are bound to *Xerxes* ;
I know, I know, that in his generous Heart,
We live more neighbour'd now, and this Attempt—

Arist. But still he lives an Enemy to *Athens*—
Still think of that—there is the Thought, which
shakes

His inmost Peace of Soul ———

Nesip. I spoke not to you—must I not be heard,
When *Xerxes'* Honour, nay, mine own's concern'd?
I well remember, when your Law condemn'd
My absent Father, I would then have spoke,
But was not heard—ev'n my Grief was scorn'd,
And my Sighs mock'd—must it be so again?

Tb. Touch not on that, I have no Memory for it—
All is amended fully — he is now
My best esteemed Friend—and if

Nesip. I know not what he is—I only speak,
That once I knew him for your bitterest Foe,
And ought to fear it still—Is he not come,
To drive us like a Tempest, from our Port,
From *Xerxes'* Heart, where we are safely harbour'd,
To perish in new Storms of Fate again?

Tb. Fear not, my Child, be aiding to my Pray'rs,
And *Xerxes*, by so many Ties secur'd,
Shall cheerfully applaud, and crown our Piety.

Nesip. Th' Event's most doubtful — wherefore
should we risque

Our

Our Peace, and its great Fountain, *Xerxes*' Love;
For cruel, thankless *Athens*? — Oh my Father,
* The *Grecians* use thy Power like the Shade
Of some wide-spreading Palm, which when the Skies
Are cloudless and serene, with barbarous Hands
They strip of its fair Branches, and tear off
Its verdant Honours; but return in haste,
And seek for Shelter from it in the Storm.

The. Be't so. — Yet know, while the least Bough
remains [Fretfully.]

A Twig, a Leaf, they shall be shelter'd still. —
Nay more, tho' they had stript my Glories bare,
My Head expos'd to all the angry Winds;
My naked Trunk should face the growling Tempest,
And guard them till I fell. —

Nesip. If 'tis resolv'd, then wherefore am I call'd?

The. Not to debate, but to befriend my Purposes,
And if my Pray'rs with *Xerxes* be repuls'd,
To second them with all thy soft Persuasion.
In this obey me, or, my Hopes deserted,
Secure enjoy the mean Delights of Empire,
And safe on *Xerxes*' Throne, pursue no more
The nobler Heights of Fame, to which I'd raise thee.

Nesip. Oh! wound me not with such unkind Sus-
picious;

Tho' much I fear offending royal *Xerxes*,
Yet more I dread the disobeying thee.
No, take me, lead me. — My fond Soul is bound
To follow thee thro' ev'ry Maze of Life,
And trust thy Guidance thro' each Path of Ruin.

The. My Favourite! nay, my Friend. — But haste,
retire;

Th' Emperor comes. — To *Aristides*' Care
I leave it to instruct you in our Purpose,
And speak the generous Motives of my Change.

* V. Plutarch Apothegmata.

Nesip. Your Will, your Lot, whate'er it is, be mine.

[*Exeunt Nesip. and Arift.*

The. He comes.—Now think on't, Fates.—I'm fix'd already.

Enter Xerxes with Guards and Train.

Xer. Where hast thou been? what Cares for Xerxes' Fame,

Have torn thee from my Side, and robb'd the Banquet

Of half the vast Profusion of its Joys?

The. I have not Time for Joy; methinks each Day Thus paid to slothful Mirth, throws back our Hopes, And leaves us in a vast Arrear to Fame.

Great Monarchs, like the Sun, should ev'ry Hour, Be circling round the Earth, surveying all.

Such are my Cares for thee; and, lo! they bring Important Tidings to thee.

Xer. Thou mean'st the bold Retreat of *Artemisia*, With all her Troops, and our revolted Generals, Yet know, my Heart unshaken feels the Loss, But as the tainted Purgings of its Blood, Whose Absence, tho' it drains its Strength a while, Adds to his Health the more.

The. Let all thy Foes, like those Revolters, fly Thy dreaded Presence.—Vainly they desert Thy royal Standards, while thy Name performs The Work of Armies, and unaided awes The stubborn *Greeks* to bend beneath thy Throne, To own thy Power, and sue for Peace from *Xerxes*.

Xer. What mean'st thou? Say;—Peace, and to me? from them?

The. Already *Athens*, trembling at thy Name, Hath hither sent her vanquish'd *Aristides*, Submissive to intreat thy great Alliance. Humbled with conscious Shame, she kneels before thee, And sends her great Ambassador to plead

Her

Her Cause, and hail *Persia's* majestick Monarch.

Xer. Haste, call him in.——Now our up-lifted
Sword

[*Exit The.*

Is at their Throat, the Slaves cry out for Mercy,
And dread the winged Vengeance of our Fury.

Enter Themistocles with Aristides.

The. Behold the Monarch of this Eastern World,
Whose royal Ear, when the Afflicted call,
Stands open as th' unfolded Gates of Heav'n,
To let the Suff'ring in.

Arist. Hail to the glorious Majesty of *Persia*,
Before whose Throne, as at the Seat of *Minos*,
The congregated Nations kneel for Justice,
And from his wide-stretch'd Mercy wait their Sen-
tence.

Behold I come, deputed from the State
Of *Athens*, as their sacred Legate here,
To sue for Peace from thee, and claim thy Friendship.

Xer. Think'st thou the Enmity of warring Nations,
That, like two Combatants, have stood so long
In Honour's Field contending for the Mast'ry,
Bath'd in each other's Blood, can be, with Ease
Affianc'd, and their deadly Feuds remov'd?
Shall a few womanish Prayers atone for all
The Millions of my Slain; for slaughter'd Hosts
And the red Carnage of the merciless War?
No, by the *Persian* Ghosts, whose Bones, unbury'd,
Thick strew your Plains, I will have mighty Ven-
geance,

Unless you stoop so low, that our proud Arm
Shall scorn to sink you more.

Arist. Who lies upon the Earth, can fall no lower;
Already *Greece* discomfited and vanquish'd,
With her best Blood hath purpled *Egypt's* Sands,
And bends beneath th' exalted Strength of *Xerxes*:
Alarm'd she sees grim War, with horrid Front,
Menace her Peace, and, with its Iron Teeth,

Gnash

Gnash deep to harrow up her torn Fields ;
 But still, she knows, that great and godlike Minds,
 Like yours, love more to pardon than destroy ;
 Mov'd with which Hopes, by me she sue for Peace,
 And courts your Mercy, while she owns your Power.

Xer. 'Tis well th' offended Gods, by Prayers appeas'd,

Sometimes arrest the Thunderer's Bolts, to hear
 And spare the Wretches whom their Rage could crush ;

And be't so now, that I, whose Power on Earth
 Stands high as theirs, in Pity may forgive
 The vanquish'd *Greeks*, and, as my Subject-Slaves,
 Protect whom else I as my Foes had punish'd.

The. I thank you, Gods. — *Greece* is not yet so low. [*Aside.*

Arist. *Xerxes'* great Soul will sure in Bounty grant
 His high Alliance on some nobler Terms
 Than Slav'ry and Subjection.

Xer. By *Mithra*, no ! if 'tis for Peace you sue,
 In Peace be *Persia's* Vassals.

Arist. Vassals and Slaves ? — No, we disdain such Terms.

No, mighty Gods ! *Greeks* suit not well with Bondage !

* What more than human Power can'st thou shew
 T'enforce so vast a Claim, such abject Homage ?

Xer. I bring two Goddesses of Race divine,
 Force and Persuasion ; Slave, now chuse thou whether.

Arist. Then know, I bring two Goddesses as great,
 The Love of Liberty, and Scorn of Death.
 No, *Xerxes*, we can live thy faithful Friends,
 Or die like fearless Foes.—*Greece* is not yet
 So far abandon'd by the angry Fates,

* Vide Plutarch for the very Words of the following six Lines.

To buy her Peace with Chains.

The. His Sternests will, I fear, o'erturn our Hopes.
[*Aside.*

Xer. Hence, Fugitive ! hast thou escap'd our
Sword

In *Egypt's* Fields, to come and brave us here?

* I thought thou cam'st to bring me Earth and
Water,

The usual Tribute that submissive Nations
Send to their conqu'ring Lords.—Go, tell thy *Greeks*,
Those who revolt to *Xerxes* shall receive
Cities for Villages, for Hamlets, Provinces ;
While those thou hop'st dare meet me in the Field,
Shall perish like weak Worms, trod down, and
trampled

E'en by their Feet 'gainst whom they turn in vain.

Arist. That yet is in the Fates.

Xer. 'Tis false ! 'tis in our Sword, on which the
Fate

Of *Athens* hangs, and loaden with the Wrongs
Of my *Themistocles*, shall level low
Her Bulwarks with the Ground. — Now, by Our
Self,

The greatest Name on Earth, I swear, *Themistocles*,
With amplest Retribution I'll avenge thee.—

The. Most generous *Xerxes*, deeply am I bound
In ev'ry View of Life to thank your Bounty,
And may high Heav'n befriend me as I wish
Thro' the poor Portion of my Days to come,
My Services, my Sword, my Life could answer
Such undeserv'd, such most unbounded Goodness.

Xer. What means my Friend, my Father, nay,
my Soldier ?

The. By all those ever-lov'd, still-honour'd Names
I claim your patient hearing ; ——— and if e'er

* Vide Plutarch for the five next Lines.

My Toils have crown'd your royal Head with
Vict'ry ;

If e'er my Sword hath propp'd your sinking Empire,
And spread your wide Dominion where the Sun
Ne'er saw the *Persian* Standard. Oh ! be kind,
And grant my pious Prayer, while thus I beg
For *Athens*' Peace and Freedom.

Xer. Ha ! by my Hopes, another Word like that
[Starts surpriz'd.

Will make me give thy Foes most ample Credence.—
Will make me think ; — but, stay, I will not think it—
'Thou can'st not.—No,—Thou would'st not join mine
Enemies.

The. No ; when I do, may Heav'n avenge such
Perjury.

Have I not sworn at the conscious Shrines,
Unending Faith to *Xerxes* ?

Xer. Nay, what are Oaths, but fancy'd Bonds, the
Mind

Gives to ensure the Body, and put off
Vain Words for Deeds, and Promise for Perform-
ance ?

'Tis not to Oaths, which only bind whom Nature
Had bound before, nor to warm Prayers and Vows,
Which the false Man can feign, I'd trust my Heart ;
But, to thy former Life, which, as a Preface,
Shews what its following Pages will produce,
That bids me trust thee, and my best Hopes with
thee,

And tells me, thou'lt prove true and faithful to me ;
'Thou wilt not plead for *Athens*.——

The. Not while she's *Xerxes*' Foe.—— But lo, re-
pentant,

She sues submissive ; humbled and subdued
She bends before you, and implores your Friendship.
Tho' she's repuls'd, I may, perhaps, be heard :
If that my Wrongs obstruct her Hopes of Peace,
Here I forgive them all, and thus I bend [Kneels.
For

For *Xerxes*' Grace, his Grace and Pardon to her.

Xer. Forbear, or thou wilt raise a Tempest here,
Will tear thy rooted Int'rest in my Heart,
And blast thy full-grown Honours. — Is it thus
Thou would'st repay my Love? — Have not I made
thee

E'en as my self in *Persia*, rais'd thee high,
And fenc'd thee round with Power?

The. My Soul's best Thoughts are daily paid to
thank you.

Xer. 'Tis false. — Are these the due Returns of
Friendship?

The Favours Monarchs do to worthy Nature's
Still born on the Wings of Love and Duty,
Return unto themselves, proving, indeed,
The Source e'en of that Power whence they flow;
Resembling thus the Rains Heav'n showers on Earth,
Which make it rich, yet still ascend in Vapours
To feed the Fountain whence they drew their Treasures:

But, oh! I find I've shower'd on thee my Bounties,
Like Dews on parched Sands that drink them up,
And leave no Trace behind them. — Leave me!
fly!

Ungrateful Wretch, and head the Hosts of *Athens*. —

The. The Gods o'erthrow me then. — Command
my Death,

But do not wound my Fame with vile Ingratitude.
He that hath Nature in him, must be grateful,
'Tis the Creator's primary great Law,
That links the Chain of Beings each to other,
Joining the greater to the lesser Nature,
Tying the Weak and Strong, the Poor and Pow'rful,
Subduing Men to Heav'n, and ev'n Brutes to Men.
When I want Gratitude, perish my Name,
Abhorr'd by *Xerxes*, by the Gods and Men.

Xer. If thou would'st pass for Grateful, let thy
Deeds,

Not idle Words, approve it. — If thou'dst shew
Thy Truth to *Xerxes*, here again renew
Thy Vows to aid me in destroying *Athens*.

The. Alas! I dare not. — Bid this Hand lop off
Its Fellow, and it shall perform the Task;
Or bid these goring Fingers from their Sockets
Tear forth these Eyes that weep for *Athens*' Suf-
f'rings,
And they shall dash them to the Earth, and stop
Grief's Blood-shot Fountains. — But to wound my
Country

Now she submits, is a much harder Task,
Which my swell'd Heart denies my Hand to do.

Xer. By Heav'n, the Traytor owns his base
Revolt,
And lays his Plots, with *Athens*, for my Ruin.

The. Oh! think not so. — My Heart, my Sword,
are yours,
For ever yours. — chuse but some other Foe. —

Xer. I will; — I have: — Thou art the Foe I
chuse
For Death and Vengeance. — Basest, worst of Men,
I've mark'd thee out for Ruin. — Seize, disarm
him. [Guards seize him.]

Enter Nesiptolema.

Nesip. No, seize me first; and, for my bridal Bed,
Give me my Grave, ere with unhallow'd Hands,
You touch my Father. — Royal *Xerxes*, say,
Are these the Joys that suit the nuptial Hour?
Must then the Blood of my *Themistocles*
Cement our new Alliance? If it must,
Here, let out mine: Mine, whose unhappy Tears
Prevail'd upon his gen'rous Soul to plead
For our lost Country's Peace. Mine was the Guilt,
And thus I come to claim it, and intreat [Kneels.]
For Mercy to her. — No, no more for her,
But him. — For me. — For all! for my *Themistocles*!

Xer. All

Xer. All, all Confed'rates to o'erturn my Glory.
 Speak some that can, for Wonder stops my Tongue!
 Am I in *Persia* now, or have we reach'd
 The *Grecian* Confines, where my secret Foes
 Have rush'd, from Ambush, on me, and betray'd
 By my own Guards, my Crown, my Throne, my
 Bed,

My Heart it self becomes a Prey to Traytors?

Nesip. Have we deserv'd such Titles? Is our Love
 To *Athens* such a Crime as quite excludes
 All Title unto yours? To yours, Oh *Xerxes*!
 My first, my last, my only Source of Joy!
 Oh! look not so incens'd, but smile upon me,
 As you were wont.—Can you, for one Offence,
 So soon forget the Vows of Love you breath'd
 So often in my Ears? Where, where are all
 The kind Caresses, and endearing Fondness,
 That ty'd us to your Love.—When, like a God,
 Your Power created us, and, out of nothing,
 Bid us rise up to a new World of Glory?

Xer. Say! answer thou; where are the sacred
 Vows

This Hour offer'd at the conscious Shrines
 Of the all-seeing Sun, of Love to me,
 And ever-during Hate to cursed *Athens*?
 Scarce made, but broken.——— Perjur'd, faithless
 Greeks,

Such is my Love to you.—Ay, weep! weep on
 Whole Deluges, they shall be spent in vain.
 Thy Tears, that us'd to melt my Rage to Softness,
 As Show'rs that thaw the hard Frost as they fall,
 Now coldly drop, like petrifying Springs,
 And turn my Heart to Stone!—Away! be gone!
 Or Ruin may o'erwhelm you too with him.

Nesip. Let it come down. What Ruin can exceed
 The Loss of Love, of *Xerxes*, of *Themistocles*!
 All other Miseries are sweet to that.
 Oh! turn not from me.—Look with those kind Eyes,

That once with Favour saw my low Distress,
And rais'd me to those glorious Heights from whence
Your Anger hath, unpitying, cast us down.

Xer. Ay, think of that! of all my Love hath
done.

To 'venge your Wrongs, to raise your thankless
Father

High as the Clouds, where, like the Sun, I form'd
Another Sun, whose Lustre rivall'd mine,
And shin'd so like mine own, the false one scarce
Could be distinguish'd from the true.—For him,
For you, I banish'd all my faithful Friends,
And drove bright *Artemisia* from my Heart.
But, by the Gods, I will amend it amply.

Haste! fly! recall the Queen.——— Bring back
Mardonius

And *Artaban*.—Haste! tell them that mine Eyes,
My Heart is open'd for them. ——— say, I groan,
I pant, I die, to do their Merit Justice,

[*Exeunt some Officers.*

And banish hence these Traytors.

Nesip. First, let me die! kill me, before I hear
Those dreaded Sounds again.—My Lord! my King!
My Husband! may I add, my Love, look on me!
Say, will you call her back? Is there no Room
Left for Repentance? Grief hath pierc'd my Soul.—
You mind me not.—You are not touch'd at all.—
See! I repent.—my Soul shall join her Pray'rs
With yours, for *Athens'* Ruin.——— Mighty Gods!
May she fall low! may *Xerxes* triumph o'er her!
May his avenging Rage fall heavy on her,
And see her as distress'd, as lost as me!

Xer. Ha! say'st thou? Sure there's Magick in thy
Pray'rs,

That tho' I've found thee false, I trust thee still.
By Heav'n, thou'st got such Hold within my Breast,
That, like a barbed Dart, the Pain is less
To let thee still lie there, than tear thee thence

With

With furious Rage.—Guards fet him free.—

I make thee

The Mistress of thy Father's Fate and *Athens'*—

Since thou again can'st hate her.—If thy Prayers

Can, ere the Close of Day, reclaim his Faith

To serve against the *Greeks*, by *Arimanius*,

I'll yet be yours, and his.—But, note! if once

The setting Sun beholds our Mercy scorn'd,

Deaf to thy Griefs, sure Vengeance shall attend

So false a Mistress, and so base a Friend. [*Exit Xer.*

Arist. Hasten, follow him. —Thy Pray'rs may yet prevail.

Nesip. Ah no! 'twere vain.—I've lost his Heart for ever.—

Unless my Father—But I dare not name it.—

I will not,—must not hope for *Athens'* Ruin.

The. Oh! add not that to all my Weight of Misery

That bends and sinks me down.—No, cruel Fates,

Tho' you can make me wretched, 'tis beyond

Your Power to make me guilty.

Arist. What's to be done? Our scant'd Space of Time,

Asks Husbandry.—Retire to your Tent,

And there adjust new Measures.

The. Wherefore, what Measures can the Ruin'd take, [*Sullenly.*

But to become their Fate, and fall with Honour?

Nesip. I do beseech you, by these Tears, by all [*Weeping.*

The fond Obedience of my Life, by this

Last fatal Proof of filial Love and Duty,

That you'll retire, and see if you can yet

Retrieve your shatter'd Fortunes.

The. Hide but those Tears, and lead me where thou wilt.—

My lost, much injur'd Child! forgive and pity me!

Could not I fall, but I must drag thee down,

Spite of thy Prayers and Tears to share my Ruin!

Oh wounding Anguish ! but I'll bear it all,
'Tis glorious for our Country's Good to fall.

The Gods, who succour Virtue in Distress,
Unhurt themselves, still add to their own Bliss,
And with more Joy from thence their Heav'n }
possess.

But those brave Men do e'en the Gods excell,
Who perish for the Joy of doing well. [Exeunt.



ACT V. SCENE I.

*The Royal Pavillion. Enter Artemisia, Mardonius
and Artaban.*

Mar. **W**HAT giddy Star To-day presides o'er
Persia ?

The Fates are not an Hour of one Mind.
While, like tost Mariners, we're forc'd to veer,
And change our Course with ev'ry Gale they send us.

Arte. It matters not, since we've prevail'd at last,
And rise triumphant o'er our prostrate Foes.

Again, Oh *Persia* ! we return to grace
Thy spacious Camps, and with our armed Hosts,
Secure thy Safety, and adorn thy Throne.

Art. A glorious Change indeed !
Fate is abroad, and stalking o'er the Field,
Whilst harness'd Terror and Confusion drive
Her Iron Plough, that overturns the Face
Of Things upon the Earth, and in its Bosom
Sows the hid Seeds of Labour. — On all Brows
But ours, dark-brooding Care and Sorrow sit
Mourning these Exiles Fall.

Mar. They reign'd, indeed, among the giddy Rout,
And in their Zeal and false Applause grew strong.

Art. Say,

Art. Say, rather, 'twas to *Xerxes'* Sloth and Weakness

They ow'd their Strength ; which, with their Ruin,
now

They strait shall answer.

Arte. Let the Weak threaten, whose enfeebled Hands

Want Power to match their Wills—we stand possess'd
Of our large Hopes, and let us strait attend
Our mighty Monarch's Summons.

Mar. The Sun is set — let's haste, the Night hath caught us.

Arte. Lo *Xerxes* comes, and like another Sun,
Rises to light us to new Days of Glory—

Enter Xerxes, attended——

Xer. Come to my Arms ! my Queen ! lodge in my
Soul ! [*Embrace.*

With these true Friends, where let our doubled Love
Atone our past Forgetfulness—then add not to
The Bitterness of Grief, by vain Reproaches ;
I'm now my self again, and know my Friends,
Whom thus my Heart bids welcome— [*Embrace.*

Arte. Fate never more divide us—be our Hearts,
Our Souls, our Hosts, our Crowns now join'd for
ever.

Art. My Emperor ! my Sword is thine again,
My Heart was ever so——

Mar. And mine with firmest Fealty.

Xer. Such I esteem you—self-condemn'd, I own
Your Faith to me, and Service to our Crown,
And brand my Fondness to these *Greeks*, with Folly !
I will not hide my Shame, it looks too like
Alliance with their Crimes—by all my Hopes,
These Minions, whom my Love had rais'd to
Heights

I blush to Name, have join'd with *Greece* against me,
From me revolted, form'd a League with *Athens*,
And

And with her Legate, *Aristides*, here,
Renounc'd my Cause, unless I sign'd her Peace.

Arte. Horrid Ingratitude! but they're found at
last

These smooth-fac'd Friends, tho' like false Gold, they
wear

The Monarch's Stamp, his Image and Inscription;
Yet to the Touch-stone brought, the specious Cheat
Is soon discern'd, and the false Metal scorn'd.

Mar. Such Crimes do call for Punishment, as
strange

And monstrous, as their Nature — *Greeks* and
Traytors!

Art. False, and ungrateful, to the best of Kings.

Arte. This we foretold you—

While *Xerxes*—but I need not name a Weakness
Your Actions have condemn'd, and soon will punish,
In these detested Exiles.

Xer. Here I abandon them! be your Resentments
The measure of their Crimes — pronounce their
Doom,

And our Imperial Sanction shall confirm,
And seal it irreverfible.——

Arte. Then be immediate Banishment their Sentence.

Art. With Confiscation to the publick Service
Of all the Wealth, immense, the *Greek* amass'd,
And Forfeiture of those * Imperial Cities,
Which, with unmeasur'd Bounty, you assign'd
His Menfals and Domains——

Xer. Be it decreed—and ere the Sun salute
This World again, see this, our Royal Mandate
Enroll'd and executed ——

Mar. That be my Care.

Art. Till then, dread Sovereign, the publick
Safety

* *Vide* Nepos.

Demands his close Confinement—ill it suits,
Both with his State and ours, that here he walks
At the full Length and Tether of his Power ;
When in the Soldiers Love, we know, he stands
So subtly rivetted, that with the least
Shew of his Danger, the mad Rout would run,
As if their holiest Temple were on Fire,
And risque their Lives to save him——

Xer. That, in our Care, be answer'd—but behold,
Where *Nesiptolema*, no more our Empress,
Her Tresses all dishevell'd, and each Feature
Swell'd with the Rack of Grief, and conscious Guilt,
Hasts, with vain Tears, to deprecate our Vengeance.

Art. Admit her not ——

Arte. Deny her Audience ! from your Presence
drive
The false Deceiver—she hath us'd so long
Your Ear to listen, and approve her Falshoods,
She yet may lead your easy Faith astray.

Xer. Let me no more be doubted—I am firm ;
My Wrongs have prov'd a Med'cine to my Heart,
And cool'd the sev'rous Poison of her Love,
In my sick Blood ——

Enter Nesiptolema.

Nesip. Where shall I turn ? where, whither shall
I fly

To find a Friend ! a Friend to my Misfortunes ?
When *Xerxes*, he, who us'd to guard me from them,
Is turn'd my Foe ; when he, who us'd to cheer me,
Like a poor drooping Flower, with his Beams,
Withdraws his Influence now, and leaves me blasted
With the cold Dews of Night and dark Despair.
Yet, oh ! if there are left some small Remains
Of Love and Mercy, in the Heart of *Xerxes* ;
I come—wretched and lost ! I come to claim them
now !

Xer. Is

Xer. Is not the Hour, assign'd for Mercy, laps'd,
And all the Offers of my Love disdain'd,
And sacrific'd to *Athens*—to mine Enemies?
What can you hope from me, but speedy Vengeance
For violated Faith, your perjur'd Vows,
And unexampled Falshood?—

Nesip. In vain, indeed, I've strove to move *Themistocles*;

Too well, I know, I see the fatal Doom
Is pass'd, and our Destruction seal'd for ever.
No more my Sight is pleasing to thine Eyes;
No more my Voice delights thee, or my Prayers
Lull your wak'd Wrath—nor dare I hope (alas!
What can I hope, forsok by Heav'n and You)
To shake the settled Purpose of your Soul,
That has decreed our Fall—And yet, perhaps,
My Royal Lord, in Pity may look back,
On all the Truth, the Faith, the Love, the Services,
The brave *Themistocles* (for oh, I fear
To name my Self) once paid to mighty *Xerxes*!
You may, you must remember, how his Arms
Sustain'd your falling Power, how his Conquests
Secur'd your Glory, how his harneft Breast
Stood like a Shield, between your Throne and
Danger!

How oft he's bled for you, and thinking that,
Mercy will cry, Let him not bleed again;
Mercy will call to stop th' uplifted Sword,
That stands unsheath'd, to pierce his noble Bosom.

Art. What mean these Shouts? there may be
Danger in them, [Shouts distant.

Things stand unsettled, and some sudden Change
May take us unprovided. [Aside to *Mard.*

Mard. Fear not, I'll watch each Motion, and prevent it. [Aside to *Art.* & Exit.

Arte. Alas! the Coward trembles for his Life,
And sends her here to whine for Mercy for him.

Xer. I

Xerx. I see't — 'tis plain — degenerate and spiritless——

But where Ingratitude, that Sin of Upstarts,
And Vice of Cowards, once takes Root, a Thousand
Base, grov'ling Crimes cling round its monstrous
Growth,

Like Ivy to old Oaks, to hide its Rottenness.
Away, have done—know, for the Traitor's Life,
Which he thinks worth his Pray'rs, we've scorn'd to
take it,

Let him fly, banish'd hence, and bear the Burthen,
To aid the *Greeks*, and plot against our Glory.

Nesip. Alas! you know him not, you wrong his
Virtue.

Arte. His Virtue! how the Name becomes his
Treasons;

Away! fly hence, and banish'd, seek some Master
To flatter and betray.

Nesip. Must I not speak? not for a Father's Life?
May I not sue to save a Parent's Blood?

Can't I be heard? will *Xerxes* stop his Ears,
When all I ask, is to prevent the Death
Of his once-lov'd *Themistocles*?—this Moment

I left him prostrate, groaning on the Earth,
Determin'd, by his Death, to expiate all
His vain, imagin'd Guilt, resolv'd by one,
One fatal Blow, to prove his Faith to *Xerxes*,
And Love to *Greece*—Oh haste, in pity, haste,
Seize him, confine him, force him to your Side;

Do any thing—do all to save *Themistocles*!

Prevent, save, stop the Ruin he resolves!

And rush between his Bosom and the Blow!

Xer. What can this mean? has he resolv'd to die?

Arte. Some poor Evasion to delude your Justice.

Art. Some Artifice, in hopes to move your Mercy.

[*vast Shouts.*

Xer. What would these hideous Clamours in the
Camp?

Enter

Enter Mardonius and Officers bloody, Swords drawn, &c.

Mar. Arm, sacred *Xerxes*! take to your Defence,
While yet 'tis in your Power—Half the Troops,
Rais'd by some Friends and Creatures of *Themistocles*,
Demand their General's Safety—*Themistocles*
Is all the Cry, for ever live *Themistocles*!
All Order, all Command despis'd, part guard
His Tent, while others, like a Torrent, sweep
All Opposition down, and call aloud,
Clashing their Swords and Shields, to seize his
Enemies.

Xer. Villains and Traitors! call our Guards—lead
up

The *Carian* Troops, and yours, to face the Tumult—
All will be lost! will none defend our Safety?

Arte. Our Troops, our Lives shall guard you.

Nesip. Whom shall they guard him from? will e'er
Themistocles

Lift up his Hand against the Throne of *Xerxes*?
No, witness Heav'n, that knows his Faith's unshaken!

Arte. His Faith! abandon'd Traitor!—yes, these
Tumults, [vast Shouts.

These Shouts proclaim it loud! have not his Arts,
And his Associates, rais'd these desperate Rebels,
To menace all our Safeties?

Nesip. He rais'd them not; Guardians of injur'd
Innocence!

Just Gods! oh whisper Love and Truth to *Xerxes*,
Witness, *Themistocles* abhors such Treasons!

Xer. 'Tis false, by Heav'n! 'tis he has hatch'd
them all,

And while he works his secret Mines of Ruin,
Hath sent thee here to spy upon our Weakness;
Hark, thy Confed'rates call thee—hence, away!

[vast Shouts and Noise of Fighting.

And join the Traitors ye have arm'd against us!

For

For ever from our Bed, our Love divorc'd,
Here I abjure thee ---- Hark the Trumpet summons.

[*Trumpets.*

My Wrongs, the Gods, and *Artemisia* call;
Greece trembles, her associate Traytors fall,
And our arm'd Vengeance shall o'er-whelm them all. }

[*Exeunt all but Nesiptolema.*

Nesiptolema Sola.

Nesip. False World! False Hopes! Ambition!
Glory! Love!

Empire! And all thy glitt'ring Poms, and Power,
Adieu! Adieu for ever! Yet, ye Fates,
I could arraign your Justice, and demand,
How I've deserv'd your Rage! ---- But I'll be silent,
And since my Doom's pronounc'd, I'll give't such
welcome,

As doth the duteous Child, who in her Arms,
To please her Guardians, takes the Wretch she loaths,
And makes his Bed her Grave! What mean these
Tumults? [Shouts.

Forbid it Heav'n, that my Father's Ruin
Should arm a Sword against my King, my Husband.
Rather than that, come all his envious Foes,
And, trampling on his Virtue, close the Scene
Of his high Fame, his Hopes, and mine, for ever.

[Shouts.

I'll haste to's Tent, and know what mean these
Uproars;

Oh they are calm to those within my Bosom. [Exit.

S C E N E II. *Themistocles's Tent.*

*Enter Themistocles, Aristides, Demaratus, with
Officers, Soldiers, and Attendants.*

Them. Urge me no more! your ill-directed Zeal,
While it hath aim'd this Shaft against my Foes,
Hath

Hath hurt ourself, and, with a mortal Wound,
Pierced my best of Life, my Fame, and Honour.

Arist. We've done what Men should do, who
dare prefer

Their Friends, and Country's Safety to their own.
With most successful Management we've gain'd
The half of all these Hosts to own your Quarrel,
And fate our fellest Vengeance on the Foes
Of *Athens*, and *Themistocles*.

Dem. We have brought o'er the bravest, boldest
Veterans,

To rise for your Deliverance — In their Files
Th'enrag'd Brigades do stand, and with Impatience
Call for *Themistocles* — Haste! lead them on!
And Fortune is your own, to carve at Pleasure,
Both to your Friends, and Foes.

Them. I think not of them — my firm Thoughts
are fix'd

On higher Views — Alas! my Hopes have soar'd
Above this under World, and all its Cares —
E'en Ruin, or Success, are grown to me
Alike indifferent — now not worth a Wish,
But never worth Sedition, or Rebellion.

Arist. Is it Rebellion, to oppose the Malice,
Of *Athens*' most inveterate Foes, and yours?

Them. Yes, when they're arm'd by *Xerxes* — Oh,
my Hand

Is chain'd unto my Heart, that dares not rise
Against him, ev'n in any angry Thought,
Or one unkind Reproach — If he has doom'd me,
I will not justify my Foes so much,
To disobey him, and by Force resist
Their Malice, or his Will —

Arist. Then, can you see your Country thus
expos'd

To all the barbarous Fury of our Enemies,
Nor rise in her Defence, when we have plac'd
The Power in your Hands, to guard, to save her?

Them. That

Them. That might be spar'd — I've serv'd her
well, and faithfully,
E'en to my Ruin serv'd her — And since, now
I must appear unfaithful unto *Xerxes*,
Or cruel to my Country, I've resolv'd
To perish like myself, to fall Triumphant,
And, with my Life, end the great, glorious Contest.

Arist. Then you are firm to die?

Them. I am.

Dem. The Gods divert you from it — 'tis a Change,
Fearful to Nature still ———

Them. To me it seems not so — Is Life so sweet,
With all its Pains, that Death's great Writ of Ease
Should be so dreadful to us, which is but
Kind Nature's Alms, to Fortune's wretched Beggars?
Sure he, who thro' his Life, like us hath scorn'd
(When tempted) to shake off the human Nature.
The Awe of Virtue, and the Love of Heav'n,
Can never tremble, when his Honour calls,
And bids him quit this Veil of Flesh, and Misery!
All we should fear, is, while we act the Part
Of Men, we sink not from the glorious Character;
Or, by some vile, or vicious Act, disgrace
The noble human Being — If we've fear'd that,
Then, unappall'd, our Hearts may Face Death's
Terrors.

Arist. It is most true — I've liv'd but for my
Country;

And, since that View's no more, rather than see
Her Bondage, and your Ruin, which I've caus'd,
(Most innocently caus'd) I stand resolv'd
To share your worst of Fortunes, and fall with you.

Dem. Oh yet, consider, you may live to turn
The Ballance of your Fate, relieve your Friends,
Defeat your Enemies, and, once again
Reign in the Heart of *Xerxes* —

Th. Say that I could — it is not worth my Care —
Alas! I've try'd this World in all its Changes,

States, and Conditions ; have been great, and happy,
Wretched, and low, and past thro' all its Stages.
And oh, believe me, who have known it best,
It is not worth the Bustle that it costs ;
'Tis but a Medley, all of idle Hopes,
And abject childish Fears.

Arist. True, true, indeed — and since you have
decreed it,
Then let us strait bid it farewell for ever,
And, with a *Grecian*, and true Soldier's Spirit,
Shake off its threat'ned Bondage.

Them. Be it so — my Soul shall lead thee to its
Refuge !
Bring in the poison'd Goblet, that shall raise
Our Spirits to the Gods — [*Slaves bring it in.*

Dem. Then let me beg by all your Love, to share
This last, this bitterest Trial of your Virtue.

Them. I charge thee not, by all our holiest Friend-
ship :
But when Death's leaden Hand hath clos'd our Eyes,
In *Grecian* Earth, within our Country's Bosom
Inhume our Bones, and labour to retrieve,
My most lov'd, most injur'd Daughter's Fortune.

Dem. I will ! I will — I dare not disobey you —
[*weeps.*

Them. I thank your Love — One kind Embrace.
[*Embrace.*

Thus, then Adieu ! Eternally Adieu !
My Friend ! my ever faithful *Demaratus* !
Once, and for ever farewell, *Aristides* ! [*Embrace.*
My noble Rival in the Race of Honour !
Here, in this Cup, be drown'd our ancient Enmity,
And all the little Cares of mortal Being.

Arist. My Soul is waiting at my Lips to pledge you.

Them. Make we Libation of the Cup to *Jove* ;
[*kneels, and pours out some Wine on the Ground twice.*
Jove the Deliverer, and Avenger :

To *Mercury*, of the Earth, and Heav'n's high Powers ;
And,

And, as at *Salamis*, with chearful Hearts, [rises.
Dauntless we charg'd, and overthrew the *Persians*,
In Search of glorious Death, or beauteous Liberty,
Find we those Blessings now ——— [drinks.

Arist. Give me the healing Cordial for a Soul
Sick of this wretched World — Ye mighty Spirits,
Who, in Defence of our dear Country's Liberty,
Bravely resign'd, and offer'd up your Lives.
To you I drink, invoke you to the Pledge,
And haste to mingle with you ——— [drinks.

Them. What, look you Pale already? How is't
with you?

Arist. E'en as with one, who in mid Ocean
shipwreck'd,
Strives yet to swim a little, and survive
A few short Moments ere he sinks for ever.

Dem. I fear your Enemies approach.

[Shouts at a Distance.

Th. Fear thou that art to live — we have shook off
That Bondage of the Soul — Yet, *Nesiptolema*,
Still I must fear for thee — But, lo she comes.

Enter Nesiptolema.

Yet, once again my fond desiring Eyes
Behold thy Face, mine Arms shall fold thee close,
[Embrace.

And my pale Lips shall bless thee ere I die.

Nesip. Fate shan't deny us that, tho' *Xerxes*' Sword
Fills all yon Fields with Blood, and thirsts for thine,
Trampling o'er all thy murder'd Friends, he comes,
Surrounded with our Foes — Haste, Fly, Escape,
Before their Vengeance seize you.

Them. Thro' my Life's Race I never fled my Foe,
Nor will I think on't now.

Arist. Farewell to Life, and thee, much-wrong'd
Themistocles! [dies.

Them. What, art thou gone? Farewell, thou noble
Grecian,

The trueſt Patriot, and the Juſteſt Man,
Be writ with Tears upon thy honour'd Grave.

Nefip. What means this? Who hath ſlain him?

[*ſtarts ſurpriz'd.*]

Haste! Speak! Alas! my Fears out-run thy Words;
You have forſook me, ſtole to Death in private,
And left me in a wild unpitying World,
Friendleſs, and deſolate --- This Bowl is poiſon'd ---

Th. It is --- 'Tis that which hath deliver'd him,
And is untying here the Load of Life
Which I have bore ſo long ---

Nefip. Then here is that which ſhall ſet free my
Soul,

And lend me Wings to ſoar with you to Heav'n,
That ſhall prevent the Triumph, the edg'd Scorn,
Of *Artemiſia*'s Pride, and *Xerxes*' Falſhood.

[*going to take the Goblet off the Table, he ſeizes it.*]

Lend me the Bowl ---- for never did thy Hand,
Reach me ſo rich a Cordial, ſo true Comfort.

Them. It muſt not be, ſuch Preſents ill would ſuit
So fond a Father's Hand ---- Oh, be't enough,
That my raſh Folly hath undone thy Peace,
Let me not kill thee too ---- thou ſhalt not taſte it ----

Nefip. By all the wild Deſpair that tears my Soul,
I muſt ---- I will ---- unkind ---- Can you ſuppoſe
I poorly would ſurvive the mighty Loſs
Of Love, of *Xerxes*, Glory, Fame, and Thee?
No, give me Daggers, Poiſon, Plagues, or Flame:
Oh, any Fate but that ---- Lend me the Bowl,
My Soul's athirſt to die --- [*ſtrives to ſeize it.*]

Them. I cannot, will not, --- Thy dear Love arreſts
My half conſenting Hand --- [*Shouts.*]

Nefip. Hark, they approach ---- Say, wouldſt
thou ſee me live,

Persia's vile Scorn, and *Artemiſia*'s Slave?

What? Can you leave me to my Foes abandon'd,
And grudge to take me with you?

Them. My

Th. My Spirits sicken — Say, can I resolve
To see thee perish! perishing by me —
My Nerves droop, slackned, and my Hand grows
weak,

And trembles while it struggles to preserve thee —
I bend to Earth — yet thus, thus to the last

[sinks down, and dashes down the Bowl.
I'll wrestle with thee for thy Life, and save thee.

Nesip. Oh most unkind! — What die before me too?
Nay, then, thou fatal Minister of Death,

[seizes Aristides's Dagger, and stabs herself.
I grasp thee fast, and plunge thee in my Bosom.

Dem. Oh she is slain!

Them. Is the Deed done? Fearful, unthought-of
Chance!

Oh, *Demaratus*, lay me by her Side,
That I may ease my Head on her lov'd Breast,
And weep awhile, and die — What Noise is this?

[Noise of, Way for the Emperor.
Still do I live? Death, are thy Darts so blunted,
Or, is thy Arm too weak to match my Spirit?

Dem. 'Tis *Xerxes*' Self, who, with your furious Foes,
Hasten to make you Pris'ner — Lo! they're here.

Enter Xerxes, Artemisia, Artaban, Mardonius,
Guards bloody, all Swords drawn.

Xer. Where are the Traytors hid to 'scape my
Vengeance?

Ha! by the Gods! here is a Scene of Death, [*starts.*
That melts my Rage to pity — Whence is this?

This wounding Sight? --- Lovely ill-fated Maid!

Am I thy Murderer? Oh speak, *Themistocles*,

What means this Pomp of Ruin?

[kneels by him on one Knee.

Them. Read there our Faith to thee, and Love to
Athens;

Behold the Fate of an unhappy Man,

Who, having stabb'd his Country, strove too late

To

To heal her Wounds, and perish'd in the Strife,
 Of bravely saving her, or serving thee.
 I faint! I die! Oh let my last best Pray'rs
 Find Faith with *Xerxes*, while I call the Gods
 To witness to my Truth to thee, to *Persia*;
 And, with my latest Breath, implore for Peace
 For *Athens*, and Forgiveness to *Themistocles*. [*dies.*
Arte. Wretched unhappy Exile!

Art. He's dead! and *Xerxes* now begins to reign!

Mard. *Persia* be safe! thus perish all thy Foes!

Xer. Away, ye Traytors to my Fame and *Persia's*!
 [*starts up.*

'Tis you o'erthrew him — By the Gods I see,
 The *Greek* was true and faithful ---- vanish! fly!
 Or Vengeance shall o'ertake you ---- Yes, *Themistocles*,
 Thy Prayers are heard, and *Athens* shall have Peace.
 With Honour hast thou run thy noble Race;
 Thro' endless Ages shall thy Glories bloom,
 And never fading Lawrels grace thy Tomb,
 While future Times my Folly must reprove,
 For thy wrong'd Friendship, and my injur'd Love!

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[*Curtain falls.*





EPILOGUE.

[The Curtain being down.]

WELL, now all's over, with this glorious Greek,
Pray give an English Woman Leave to speak.
*I never lik'd these Plays of Greeks and Persians ;
Those virtuous Fools, are One of my Aversions :
If Greeks would die, to serve their Country, long since,
Must we be plagu'd with such old-fashion'd Nonsense ?
I don't know how you'll like it ; but in France
A Man were hang'd, such Maxims to advance.
But you, rough Britons, with your cursed Bravery,
Have such a vile Antipathy to Slavery ;
You'd rather die like Fools, in Freedom's Cause,
Than once survive your Liberties and Laws ;
But, for my Part, Good Friends, upon my Conscience,
I'll never die a Martyr to such Nonsense.
Take heed, dear Beaus, these Doctrines spread no
further ;
Do not for Britain's Good, commit Self-murder.
What ! give up Love and Life for senseless Honour,
And Care of one's dear Country ?—sob upon her !
Well, let me die, these Bards are awkward Fools,
To offer us such rigid formal Rules,
That only suit with Pulpits, Books or Schools.
Rules ; but that Men find fitter of their own
To walk by, would turn Europe upside down.*

But,

E P I L O G U E.

But, thank our Stars, we live in better Times,
 Than moral Poets paint in musty Rhymes ;
 Now, Men have Sense enough, to take the Measure
 Of Publick-Blessings, by their Private-Treasure ;
 For if we're out of Place, or Poor, d'ye see,
 Why, what's the Publick-Good to you or me ?
 E'en let us make our Fortunes, honest Friends,
 And sink or swim, dear Country—we've our Ends.
 What think you, Britons, are'n't we in the Right ?
 You're loth to speak—well then, Sirs, I invite
 You All to answer this, To-morrow Night.

[Goes out, and in a little time Returns
 in a Hurry.]

Hold ! hold ! stay ! stay !—good lack, I have forgot !
 To speak much more, about—the Lord knows what—
 Stay, stay ! my Stars ! how one is forc'd to bawl !
 Sit down ! here's a Mistake ! I've not spoke all——
 Where is this Prompter ?—rot you for a Dog,

[strikes him.]

I thought I'd finish'd the whole Epilogue.

Let's see the Paper—so —The Bard unknown, [reads.
 Says, that he throws this Piece upon the Town,
 As Negroes try their Children——if it swim,
 He'll own it——if it sinks ——sink on for him !
 Yet, tho' disown'd, you're all oblig'd to cherish
 A Play, that's thrown, like Bastards, on the Parish.
 E'en Club for't then, and as known Fumblers get
 Brats father'd on them, do you father Wit ;
 And if there's any here, that likes to own
 This spurious Piece, he may—for Half a Crown,
 If all's rejected, and if no Petitions
 Can screen our Author from too hard Conditions,
 He vows to burn his Books, discard his Muse,
 And plead like School-boys whipt, the old Excuse ;
 'Tis the First Time, save him this Once, and then,
 Indeed ! he'll never do the like again.

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F I N I S

